

# JACK TENFIELD'S STAR

MARTHA JAMES







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JACK TENFIELD'S STAR

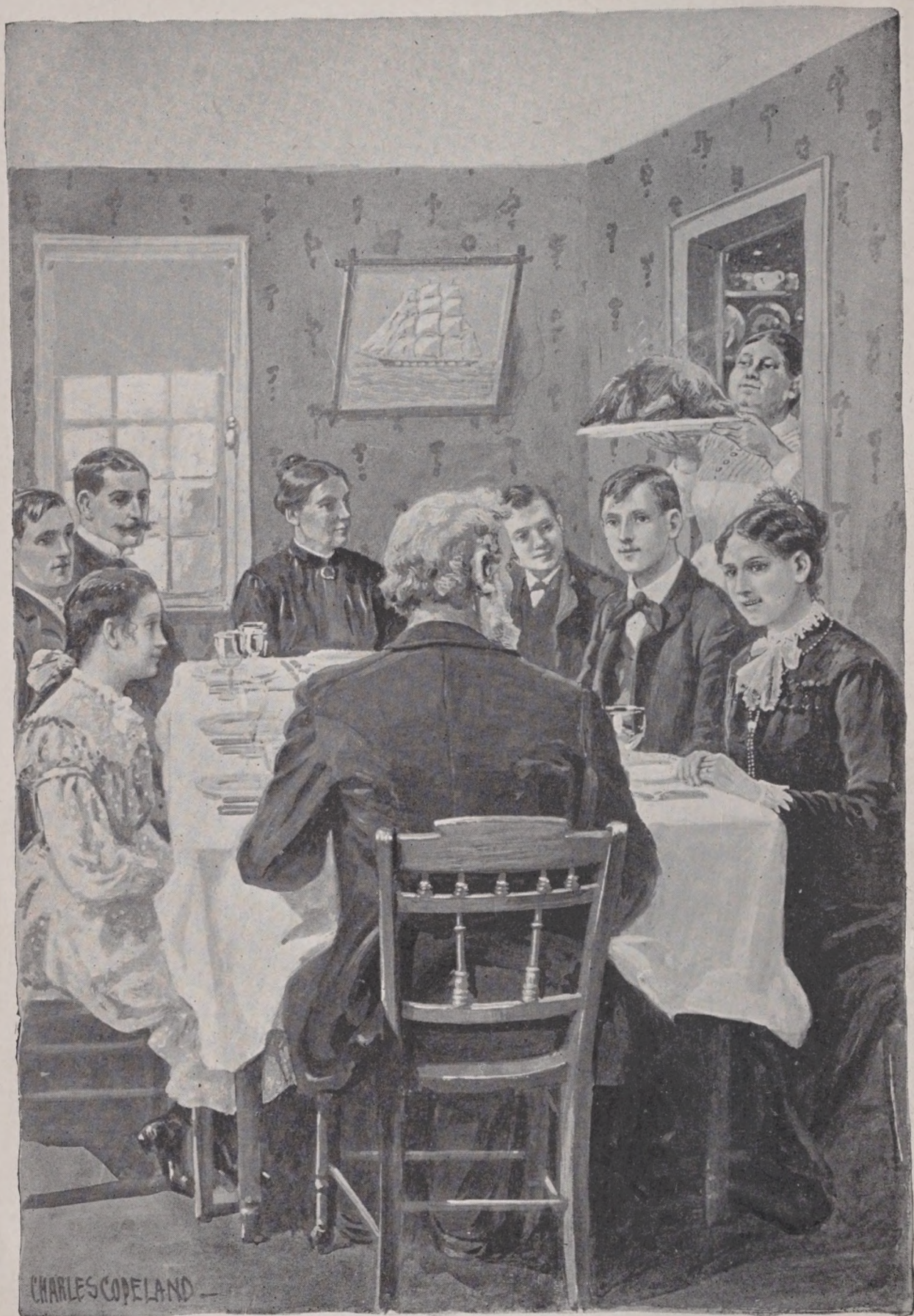












THE THANKSGIVING DINNER. — Page 302.



# JACK TENFIELD'S STAR

A STORY OF YANKEE PLUCK

*(For all Boys and some Girls)*

BY

MARTHA JAMES *pseud*

Author of "My Friend Jim," and "Tom Winstone,  
'Wide Awake'"

ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES COPELAND

*Mrs. Martha C. M. Doyle.*



BOSTON

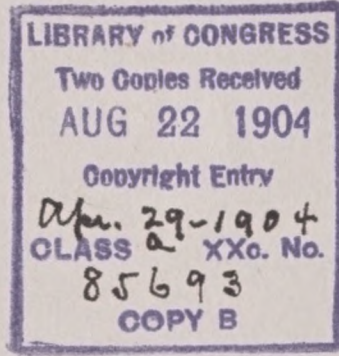
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JACK TENFIELD'S STAR

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# JACK TENFIELD'S STAR

## CHAPTER I

### A CHANGE OF FORTUNE

"TWENTY-FIVE dollars."

The Professor shook his head, pausing slightly after each word. "I am sorry that I cannot give it to you."

Jack was silent. It was the first time in his life that a request for money on his part had been refused.

"How old are you now, my boy?" asked the Professor, seeing a shade of disappointment spread over the lad's features.

"I am fifteen, sir."

"Fifteen. Well, Jack, you are old enough to know what I am going to tell you, although I fear you may not realize the full significance of it. You have always thought that your father was wealthy, have you not?"

"Yes, sir. I thought he was quite rich."

"On the contrary, my boy, he died a poor man. Strange as it may seem to you, who have always had an abundance, if the Doctor were alive at this moment,



he would be poor in this world's goods. I will not go into details with you now, Jack," he went on. "It will suffice to say that he lost a fortune in a venture that promised well. He never realized the extent of his loss, till a week before his death, and I fear the knowledge hastened the end."

"Isn't there some money owed to my father?" asked the lad suddenly.

"Yes, there is a great deal of money due for professional services; there are, also, several sums that he loaned at different times. But I fear I'll never be able to collect much of it. I have often thought that many people imposed upon him, knowing his generous nature. I remember on one occasion saying so to him, but he only smiled in his good-natured way, and assured me that his patients meant to pay their bills, but could not because of misfortune and poverty."

"I have heard that father never sent one of them a bill," ventured Jack.

"Ah! my boy, your father was generous to a fault—to a fault," repeated the Professor. "Well, we must see what can be done," he went on after a pause. "I have had an offer for the horses, and Hitchcock will take the Jersey."

"Must the horses be sold?" asked Jack quickly.



"I am afraid they will have to go. I hope we can save this fine old place," continued the man, glancing through the open window at the tulip beds and the broad stretch of green beyond, "but it is heavily mortgaged, and we may have to part with it. Your aunt is the real owner now. I have been informed by a recent letter that she will leave Europe in a few months and will probably be in America this winter, so for the present, at least, there may be no change; but what I want to impress on you, my boy, is the fact that in your present circumstances twenty-five dollars is not easily obtained and should not, under any circumstances, be idly spent. You see, Jack, you are not rich, at least not in a material sense."

The Professor smiled as he made the last remark, but the face of the boy who listened was very sober.

"I am going now," said the man, adjusting his spectacles, "but I will talk with you again about the change in your affairs."

Professor Lesch, the cousin and life-long friend of the deceased Dr. Tenfield, walked slowly out of the study, and left the boy standing at the window.

It was a morning of spring showers, but the lad was not looking at the rain, nor was he thinking of the picture that was before his eyes—a picture that



the reader may have seen if he happened to live a few years ago in that part of Roxbury that borders on Brookline.

In the days when the horse-cars jingled their way from our most beautiful suburb to the Old Granary Burying Ground, they passed an old-fashioned yellow mansion. A long driveway, shaded by elms, curved its way to a vine-covered porch. Green fields stretched away from its broad piazzas, and an orchard of russet apple trees on the side of the house skirted the road-side for nearly a quarter of a mile.

The fields have disappeared. They have become part of one of our broad avenues, over which the electric cars speed to the subway.

Rows of apartment houses glare down on the site of the russet apple orchard, and all that remains of the old mansion are two stone gate-posts and a bit of green pasture land.

The boys of the neighborhood play foot-ball on the site of the house, long since torn down, and practise jumping over the stone posts.

At the time of my story, the yellow house, with its fields and bright gardens, was a beautiful old place, and the home of the wide-awake boy whose story I am going to tell you.



Jack Tenfield wanted twenty-five dollars. He thought he wanted it more than anything else in the world. Standing at the window on that spring morning, his mind was filled with visions and schemes and ventures concerning the means to obtain this sum of money. But, in spite of a fertile imagination and the busiest pair of hands in Christendom, Jack was unable to do it.

Suddenly the lad's thoughts were interrupted by the appearance of a barefooted girl, who cried, "Oh, Jack, I have such news—guess."

"What is it?" asked the boy without looking at her.

"I shan't tell you, till you stop gazing out of that window and condescend to look at me."

"Well, let's hear it," said Jack, glancing at his sister in an absent kind of way.

"Give you three guesses," said Nannie, who liked to get Jack interested, and then keep him in suspense.

"Oh, bother!" exclaimed the boy, "tell it, why don't you—I'm busy."

"Busy doing nothing," laughed Nannie, "but you do look terribly sober—anything the matter?"

"The bright side, the bright side,  
My brother, is always the right side."



Nan was given to rhyming, and sang the above words to a tune all her own.

"If you have anything to tell, Nan, tell it."

"Well, then, old sober face," cried the girl, looking more mischievous than ever, "Aunt Cordelia is coming, she's expected any minute. Isabelle has just had a telegram. Now, Jack, I've been having lots of fun on your raft, and took off my shoes and stockings, but I don't know where I left them. Did you meet a little shoe or two, that's what I would like to know, because Isabelle says I must find them at once."

"Why, I thought Aunt Cordelia was in Europe," said Jack, ignoring Nannie's question.

"She was there until a week ago. Oh, Jack, she's as rich as a king—just fancy the good times we'll have—I haven't had one cent to spend for weeks. Aren't you glad she's coming—aren't you joyful! Oh, dear! don't be so stupid—turn around and say *something*, even if it hurts you."

Jack faced Nannie, after this outburst, a gleam of interest in his eyes. It occurred to him that if a rich aunt were coming, the twenty-five dollars did not seem so far off.

"I had forgotten about her being so rich, Nan. Let us hope she arrives safe and sound, and the sooner the



better. It's a lucky thing she's coming just at this time," Jack added soberly.

"Why 'this time'?" asked the girl.

"Don't you know that we are poor; that father lost a great deal of money before he died?"

"Ah!" said Nannie, "that must have been why Isabelle was crying when the Professor left her this morning. I suppose he told her about it."

"Yes; it's too bad," murmured Jack.

"Pooh!" cried Nan, "who cares whether we're rich or poor! I wouldn't cry about it."

"But everything is going to be sold, Nan. How will you like that?"

"I hope they won't include my shoes—I own only one pair—but, Jack," cried the girl, looking serious for a second, "don't you think that everything will be made right when Aunt Cordelia comes?"

"I hope so," was the answer.

"I wonder what she is like," cried Nan. "Nora says she has not seen you or me since we were babies—I have been thinking of her all the morning—perhaps, Jack, she'll bring us a lovely present."

"I wish she'd bring me a present of twenty-five dollars," said Jack.

"What do you want it for?" asked Nan.



"That's a secret. Perhaps I may tell you later, but at present nobody knows anything about it except Burge Tebbett."

"Burge Tebbett!" exclaimed the girl; "why, when did you see Burge Tebbett?"

"Not since last October, when we left Horn Point, but I had a letter from him this morning."

"Did you?" cried Nan, greatly interested. "How are all the folks down there? Wouldn't I just like to see them now, and have the good times again!"

"I was afraid that we might not see it this summer," said Jack, "when I heard the news about father's fortune, but now that Aunt Cordelia is coming I guess we'll go."

"Of course we'll go," cried Nan. "Why! wouldn't it be a queer summer, if we didn't browse in that old place. I think I could find my way around it blindfolded; couldn't you?"

Before Jack could answer, there was a sound of wheels in the driveway, and with one bound Nannie was out of the room and across the wet lawn to look for her shoes in the barn. Not finding them, she ran back to the piazza and stood in full view of the coach, her happy little heart beating faster at the thoughts of



an aunt who was going to be a sort of fairy godmother to the whole family.

Visions of a beautiful lady, in silks and jewels, stepping from her carriage, with smiles of welcome, came into Nannie's romantic little head, as she gazed at the coach, which had stopped at the front steps, and the black driver who was helping the lady to alight.

Alas, for Nannie's bright picture! The lady was not beautiful. She wore a faded drab skirt, a black cape, heavily beaded, and an old-fashioned bonnet. She gave some orders to the coachman in a quick, decided manner, mounted the steps, and never glanced at the girl who was standing in the rain to give her welcome.

Nannie's first impulse was to run into the house and make herself known, but she felt a little timid after the first glimpse of the newly arrived relative, and remembering Isabelle's orders to put on her shoes and stockings, she started once more for the barn to make a more thorough search.

Having looked about in vain for several minutes, Nannie hurried back to the house, and reached the piazza quite breathless. She stood for a second, looking into one of the low, broad windows that opened



into the sitting room, where her sister Isabelle was reading.

"Don't come in here with your wet feet," cried the girl, looking up from her book, a frown of disapproval on her fair young face.

"I can't leave them outside, can I?" said the owner of the bare feet, at the same moment raising the window and stepping lightly into the room.

"Nannie Tenfield, you ought to be ashamed of yourself; the idea of a great girl like you going about barefooted!"

"Well, I'm not the least bit ashamed," was the saucy answer."

"I know that very well," said the young lady, "you don't possess any such civilized quality."

"It isn't shame I feel, Belle—it's remorse. I've lost my nice, friendly old shoes. I hate new shoes, 'cause they're not a bit friendly; they're full of spite and pinch my feet."

"Please do not make such idiotic remarks, Nannie; they are not at all becoming. You had better get some shoes at once, and put them on before Aunt Cordelia sees you."

"Where is she?" asked Nan in subdued tones.

"She's gone to her room to rest. I hope she won't



find you looking like an Indian. You ought to change your dress before she comes down—comb your hair and—Nannie, what *are* you trying to do?”

“Hold my breath till I *bust*,—do you s’pose I could?”

Isabelle did not deign to answer. She arose with all the dignity of a young lady of nineteen responsible years, closed her book, and, casting eyes of scorn on the tomboy, walked out of the room.

When the door closed on Isabelle, Nannie walked to a large mirror, with a massive gilt frame that hung over the mantel and frowned at her reflection there.

It was a roguish, gypsy face that frowned from the mirror, the most prominent feature of which was the great dark eyes, very wide apart. Two thin “pig tails” of straight black hair, tied with pink strings, stood at right angles to Nannie’s ears.

“Ugh! you homely thing!” murmured Nannie, making a quick grimace at herself that gradually widened to a smile.

Suddenly the door opened, and the smile died on Nannie’s lips, as her eyes met those of a tall, angular-looking woman whose height was accentuated by coils of shiny black hair, piled on the very top of her head.



Nannie turned crimson and faced her aunt; standing first on one bare foot, then on the other.

Aunt Cordelia, who had advanced to the center of the room, put up her lorgnette, and surveyed Nannie very much as if examining some new species.

The girl began to squirm under the inspection, and for the first time in her life bare feet were uncomfortable.

"I suppose you are Annette," said Aunt Cordelia after a pause of several seconds.

"Yes'm, I'm Nannie."

"Nannie!" repeated the lady; "horrible!" She took a second survey of the girl that lasted somewhat longer than the first, then dropped her lorgnette.

"How old are you, Annette?"

"I'm thirteen, going on fourteen."

"Hm! an extremely awkward age—for you," added Cordelia with great deliberation.

Nannie felt a lump in her throat, but before the mortifying tears appeared, she flew past her aunt and out of the room.

Breathless, she reached her own little room, where she locked the door against all intruders and cried as if her poor little disappointed heart would break.





CHARLES COPELAND.

AUNT CORDELIA . . . SURVEYED NANNIE VERY MUCH AS IF  
EXAMINING SOME NEW SPECIES. — *Page 12.*







Nannie's dreams of a fairy godmother had been rudely shattered.

While all this was going on, Jack Tenfield was at his desk in his room, an open letter before him.

It was the second time that day that he had perused its contents, part of which was as follows:

"You remember the *Rocket* that was high and dry in the Captain's yard this many a day. Well, last winter he gave it to me. You always said it would make a fine boat if it was fixed up a bit, so the Captain looked it over with me the other day, and he said it would cost about twenty-five dollars to put it in first-rate condition. You see, Jack, for this small sum the *Rocket* can be made as tight and neat as a new boat, and it will be *ours*.

"I've been working off and on this winter and I have nearly seven dollars laid by—if you could help out we might be partners this summer and run the *Rocket* between Horn Point and the shore.

"This was your idea and I have thought about it all winter. I think it's a bully old scheme. There's money in it for both of us. What do you say?

"Yours, waiting for a quick answer,

"BURGE TEBBETT."

This was the letter that had caused Jack to ask his guardian for twenty-five dollars.



The Professor's refusal to give the money and the reasons therefor, opened up a new life for our hero.

His father had been dead but three months, and he realized for the first time that he was no longer the wealthy youth he had supposed himself to be, that if he wanted money he would have to earn it.

How he succeeded, the following chapters will tell.



## CHAPTER II

### JACK'S SECRET

SEVERAL weeks had passed since Miss Cordelia Tenfield invaded the quiet of the old yellow mansion.

Within its doors, previous to her coming, existence had been as peaceful as the summer sky before the storm clouds sweep across it. Cordelia changed this state of affairs in a very short time. She ordered everybody about, scolded Jack and Nannie, gave advice to Isabelle, deplored the extravagance of the faithful Nora, who had been housekeeper for years, and found fault with everything.

The Professor heard such a tale of woe every time he called that he was looking forward to a trip to India with more than ordinary interest, because it would take him away from many disagreeable encounters with Cordelia.

As the late Dr. Tenfield had named them guardians of his children's affairs, it was necessary to discuss several matters. These discussions had become such a bugbear to the timid, peace-loving Professor



that he dreaded every meeting with Cordelia and avoided her as much as possible.

One morning as he sat busily writing in the library, Cordelia walked unceremoniously into the room, her face crimson with anger. "I really do not know, Professor, what we shall do with Annette."

"Annette!" said the man, fidgeting in his chair at the woman's manner; "why, what is wrong with the child?"

"She is not a child, Professor, that is where you all make a serious mistake; this petting her and letting her do just as she pleases, as if she were a baby, has really spoiled her—she is rude, positively rude, and has been impudent to me ever since I came."

"What! my little Nannie," cried the Professor. "I cannot believe that she would be impudent. She is a little wild; we have let her run about too much, perhaps, but surely Nannie is a good child."

"Good for nothing," was the emphatic reply.

"Well, well, she has had no mother," said the man gently, "you must make allowances."

"It was only this morning," said Cordelia, "not an hour ago, that I met her going off with a basket of stale bread, and when I asked her where she was going she answered, 'To visit my summer boarders.' I



watched her, Professor, and she went *down to that mudpool*," cried the indignant lady.

"Wha—what did she mean?" asked the man.

"Bull-frogs—think of it—bull-frogs, and birds, and stray cats, and every other rubbish."

The Professor could not refrain from smiling, knowing Nannie's odd little ways, and he said:

"Nannie is an original little soul—she has a queer way of expressing things, that is all."

"I also wish to speak about Jack. I am afraid he is not doing right, that he is plotting some mischief. I found him in the barn talking in whispers to a dirty-looking, ragged boy. What do you think of that?"

"I see no wrong in that," was the quiet answer. "Rest assured, Cordelia, that he has no dishonorable secrets. I know Jack."

"But who was that disreputable-looking creature with him?" demanded Cordelia.

"It might have been the boy of some of the Doctor's patients. He attended many poor families below the Crossing, and I presume Jack knows some of the lads."

"That is another subject I wish to discuss with you. Can nothing be done to collect the large sum of money that is owed to the estate by these people?"

"I fear not," was the answer.



"How foolish for a man of my brother's calling to attend people who never paid him a cent for his services. No wonder that his home is mortgaged, and his children almost penniless. He must have been crazy."

"Well, well," said the Professor, rising to leave the room and the hated atmosphere of a scold, "you do not understand him, Cordelia, and perhaps we had better not talk about it."

"Another foolish one!" muttered Cordelia when the door closed on the Professor. "No more business to him than to a jackal."

She walked to the window with compressed lips, and was just in time to see a ragged-looking boy coming up the path.

He stood beside one of the tall elms and gave three shrill whistles. After waiting a minute he made straight for the barn and entered it.

Now was Aunt Cordelia's opportunity to find out his business with Jack. She stepped quickly from the window, went downstairs, and hurriedly left the house by the back door. When she reached the barn, she walked to the rear of it and peeked through a small window.

Cordelia was in the nick of time, and her face glowed with satisfaction when she saw the strange lad take



something from his pocket and place it under a stone behind the barn door. When this was done, he went outside, glanced toward the house, and ran across the field, taking a short-cut to the street.

Cordelia could hardly wait, so great was her curiosity to see what was under the stone and thus discover the secret that her nephew was taking such pains to conceal.

She looked around to make sure that he was not in sight, and went at once to the stone behind the barn door. Under it she found a small piece of brown paper folded tightly, and on opening it saw that it contained a long list of names and addresses. The first name that caught her eye read as follows:

“Mr. Samuel De Wolf XX.”

The inquisitive lady pondered over this name and wondered what it all meant, especially the two crosses. She noticed that the other names were not thus marked.

Mr. Samuel De Wolf was an old friend and neighbor. With a brother, Ford De Wolf, about fifteen years his junior, he lived in a large white house, a short distance from the Tenfield mansion. The



brothers were wealthy wool merchants, but while Mr. Samuel devoted his time to the interests of the great warehouse on Atlantic Avenue, it was well known that Mr. Ford spent a great deal of time on boats and dogs. He was a famous oarsman, and the owner of some of the finest dogs in the country. The brothers had a beautiful summer home at Horn Point, adjoining that of the late Dr. Tenfield.

Aunt Cordelia knew all this and wondered what the list of names meant. She was just about to ponder on the second name when footsteps were heard.

Hastily replacing the paper under the stone, she walked to the other end of the barn.

"Looking for eggs, auntie?" said a boyish voice that she recognized at once as that of Jack.

Her first impulse was to accuse Jack of some underhanded business, but on second thoughts she decided to find out more about it. She hoped by waiting to discover him in the very act, so she answered calmly, "Do you ever find eggs in here?"

"Yes, ma'am," said Jack with a smile, "look in that old black hat in the corner, I put it there because the big gray hen always laid an egg in that spot."

"There are no eggs here to-day," said his aunt, as she sauntered slowly out of the barn.



Jack evidently knew that the paper was under the stone, because no sooner did Cordelia disappear than he seized it, glanced over its contents, and slipped it into his pocket.

He wore a very happy smile as he turned a "cart-wheel" from the barn to the path outside, and whistling softly to himself, hurried to the house and went at once to his room, where he wrote the following letter:

"DEAR BURGE:

"All this time I have been working out the problem of how to make twenty-five dollars. I have thought about it all day and pretty near dreamt about it all night. At last I have found a way to get it, thanks to a boy named Billy Havey that I know. I will tell you all about that later, but just now I have only time to say go ahead with the *Rocket*. Make her look as well as you can. A coat of paint will do wonders for that old tub. Expect another letter very soon from

"JACK."

It did not take Jack many minutes to seal this letter and get it started on its way to Horn Point.

Some time later he entered the sitting room all smiles, and found Nannie making faces at herself in the old mirror.



"Say, Nan, you're no beauty, but I wouldn't feel so badly about it, if I were you," laughed the boy, who was really very fond of his sister, but liked to tease her at times.

"I don't want to be a beauty," cried Nannie. "Isabelle's a beauty, and I wouldn't be like her for anything."

"I suppose one beauty is enough in the family," laughed Jack.

"One too many in this family," declared Nannie. "Do you know why? 'Cause we're poor, and Isabelle isn't a bit happy."

"She ought to be," replied the lad. "She's Aunt Cordelia's favorite, and will probably get all her money. That ought to make her happy."

"Yes, Jack, but Aunt Cordelia is terribly stingy and disagreeable, even to a favorite, and Belle has to smother a whole lot of rebellion to please her."

"I might smother a little if I thought she'd give me all that money. Oh, don't I wish I was rich, Nan! I'd have a bully old time, and travel all over the world."

"And I'd go with you," cried Nan, as eagerly as if it were a settled matter.

"I bet you wouldn't," was Jack's unfeeling reply;



"girls are no good to travel; they're afraid of things. I thank my stars I'm not a girl."

"I'm sorry I'm one every minute," sighed Nannie; "but just the same, Jack Tenfield, I'm *not* afraid of things. Didn't I walk through Hitchcock's field when the bull was loose, didn't I?"

"Pshaw!" said Jack, "you're afraid of a mouse. Now, aren't you? Afraid of a little, scared, hunted mouse!"

"Ye-es," assented Nan reluctantly. "I don't know why it is, but they make little shivers run down my back."

"Look out! Perhaps I have a couple," cried Jack, stepping back and pretending to draw out something from his pocket.

With a scream, Nannie made a rush for the nearest chair, while Jack gave her a pitying smile and left the room.

He had hardly gone when Aunt Cordelia entered. She stood at the door and glared at the girl standing on the chair.

"Get down, Annette."

Nannie slipped down into the chair.

"I have been in this house almost four weeks and in that time I have never seen you do anything useful.



You do not seem to be interested in those things that usually appeal to a girl of your age. In short, you do not behave like a girl at all."

Nannie sat in sullen silence during this speech, and Cordelia, feeling that the girl was quite overcome by the weight of her faults, felt encouraged to go on.

"Can you sew, Annette?"

"I'm learning in school, but I can't sew very straight."

"You can't sew. Can you wash dishes or dust a room? Can you make bread,—answer me, Annette,—can you make a loaf of bread?"

"I never made anything in my life 'cept molasses candy," Nan admitted.

"Oh, such a worthless girl! When I was your age, miss, I could do anything. Pray what do you intend to do when you grow up?"

Nannie slipped out of the chair and flew past her aunt to the door.

"When Jack has a girl like me, I'm going to say all the hateful things I can think of to her, there!" flashed Nan, slamming the door.

Aunt Cordelia sank into the nearest chair and applied her smelling salts.

"It is useless to try to make anything out of her,"



murmured Cordelia. "She is impossible." She sat for many minutes in deep thought, then rang for the maid.

"Is Miss Tenfield in the house?" asked Cordelia, when the young woman appeared.

"Yes, ma'am; I think she is in her room."

"You may send her to me at once," said the lady in her most decided manner.

"Yes, ma'am," said the maid, who had assumed a very docile air, while standing before Miss Cordelia, but when the door was shut between them, shook her fist and muttered, "The ould tyrant!"

Very pretty and accomplished and shrewd withal was Miss Isabelle Tenfield, the late Doctor's eldest child. At the time of her father's death she had been attending a fashionable boarding school for young ladies, where she had acquired, among other things, a great dislike for the quiet life in the old yellow house.

There was no sentiment in Miss Tenfield, but little Nannie had enough for both.

The knowledge of her father's loss of fortune had been a sad shock to Isabelle, but she brightened up wonderfully when Aunt Cordelia appeared.

She smiled graciously at every word and act of the tyrannical lady, whose wealth covered a multitude of



disagreeable qualities in Isabelle's eyes. In Cordelia she saw a possible means of escape from the dull life before her, and therefore made it a point to agree with her aunt in everything.

When the maid announced her errand, Isabelle lost no time, but hurried down to the sitting room, where she said sweetly:

"Did you want to see me, auntie?"

"Yes, dear. Be seated; I want to talk with you. Annette is a little savage, but you are a good child, Isabelle, and I am going to take you out of these wretched surroundings. I am greatly disappointed in Jack, also. I fear he has low tastes. How would you like to travel with me?"

"Oh, auntie, I would like it very much, indeed," cried Isabelle, blushing with pleasure.

"Well, dear, I will talk it over with the Professor. In the meantime you would better look over your belongings, and be ready to go with me at any moment."



## CHAPTER III

### A FEW INCIDENTS

“I do not know just what your aunt’s plans are,” said the Professor, the following morning, “but you will probably make your home with her.”

Jack looked anything but pleased at this piece of news, as he asked, “Are we going to stay here?”

“I presume so; you know I am going away very shortly, and Cordelia will decide whatever is best for you. Of course, Jack, I shall always be interested in you, and if at any time you want anything, I hope that the son of my oldest friend will not forget me.”

“Thank you,” said the boy, and added after a short pause, “I will finish at the Latin School and enter college just the same as if father had lived; shan’t I?”

“Oh, undoubtedly,” replied the Professor, “your aunt is a wealthy woman,—I may say a very wealthy woman. She will carry out her brother’s ideas in regard to that, I feel confident.”

At this point in the conversation, Nannie burst into the room in great excitement, crying out: “What do



you think has happened? Burglars broke into De Wolf's last night and stole Bolivar—he's worth ever so much money—they say he's the most valuable dog in this country—and Mr. Ford has offered a reward of fifty dollars for his return."

"Bless my soul," said the Professor, smiling at the girl, "you quite take one's breath with your news."

"I've just been up to Hitchcock's," Nannie went on, "they're all talking about it."

"They think the robbery was committed by some person familiar with the house," said Aunt Cordelia, walking into the room with the morning paper in her hand, followed by Isabelle.

"Read it, Professor," said Cordelia, pointing to a short paragraph in the paper.

"Strange," said the man, glancing over the account, "who could have done such a thing."

Aunt Cordelia looked hard at Jack, who was eagerly reading the paper over the Professor's shoulder.

"It's too bad!" exclaimed the boy, "Mr. Ford thought a great deal of that dog."

"I wonder if Samuel was at home," said the Professor.

"No, sir; he isn't at home," answered Jack "he's been in New York for a few days."



"How do you know?" asked Aunt Cordelia abruptly, and scanned the boy with her sharp eyes.

Jack hesitated for a second, and his face grew red as he answered, "I was up there last night; the hired man told me."

"What business took you at Mr. De Wolf's house last night?" asked Cordelia.

To the surprise of everybody in the room Jack did not answer.

Professor Lesch, wondering not so much at the question as at the woman's tone and manner, replied: "Why, Cordelia, what mystery can there be in the fact that Jack was there?"

"Ask him; ask him," repeated the woman, pointing to the boy.

"I would rather not tell what my business was, at least not now," said Jack, his flushed cheeks growing a shade deeper.

Cordelia looked at the Professor with compressed lips. "I told you so. I am not surprised," she went on, "that any boy who has secret meetings with a disreputable-looking, ragged boy, refuses to answer that question."

"What do you mean, Aunt Cordelia?" cried Jack with flashing eyes.



"Just what I say," replied the woman. "I saw that paper, containing a list of names, hidden in the barn, for your eyes only, and the name that headed the list was that of Mr. Samuel De Wolf, marked with two crosses."

"Well, what of that?" cried the boy.

"That, sir, was only two days ago. There has been a robbery at this house, a valuable dog has been stolen. The thief must have been familiar with the movements of the household—must have known that a reward would be offered. You say that you knew Mr. De Wolf was not at home, that you went there last night, but you refuse to tell why you were at the De Wolf house the night of the robbery. Don't you think, sir, it looks rather suspicious, to say the least?"

"There was nothing dishonorable in my going there, or in my business with that ragged boy, but it *was* dishonorable to spy upon him, and read other people's letters," cried Jack. "Billy Havey is poor, and doesn't wear very good clothes, but he's honest," flashed the indignant boy.

"Havey, Havey," muttered Cordelia, trying to think why the name seemed familiar to her. "Oh, I remember now," she added. "In looking over your father's accounts, I found that a certain William Havey



owes almost three hundred dollars for medical attendance on various members of his family. This is the son, I suppose. An idle fellow, who ought to be at work, and help pay his debts."

"He does work," said Jack. "Nobody ever could say that Billy was lazy. While he was going to school he sold newspapers night and morning, and did chores at Hitchcock's every Saturday. Now he has to leave school, and he's got steady work in a market, so he has given up the newspapers."

"Indeed!" said Cordelia, "and what has all this to do with you?"

"Only this," flashed Jack, stung at last into telling his secret. "Billy Havey has given me his newspaper route for the present, and I'm selling papers to earn some money. That paper you saw in the barn was a list of Billy's house customers. The two crosses after Samuel De Wolf meant that there were two papers left there every night, one for Mr. Samuel, the other for Mr. Ford. It was when I left the papers last night that the man told me Mr. Sam was in New York."

"So Dr. Tenfield's son has taken to selling newspapers,—an honorable career, to be sure," sneered the lady.



"I'm not ashamed of it," said the boy in a low, clear voice.

"Professor Lesch," said Cordelia suddenly, turning to the silent witness of the affair, "I have decided to leave here this afternoon. My niece Isabelle will accompany me. I will write you about my future plans." So saying, Aunt Cordelia walked with great dignity out of the room, without so much as a glance at Jack. Isabelle followed at once, and the Professor, longing to get away from the house until Cordelia was safely out of it, pleaded an engagement and took his leave.

"Oh, Jack," said Nannie, when they were alone, "I think it's great fun, your selling newspapers."

"I'm not doing it for fun, Nan. I want to earn twenty-five dollars."

"How much have you made so far?" asked the girl.

"One dollar and forty-eight cents; but, you know, I haven't been doing it very long."

"I'm so glad auntie is going, aren't you, Jack? We'll have Nora all to ourselves, and no one to scold us. I'm glad she isn't going to invite us to live with her."

"Live with Aunt Cordelia!" cried Jack. "I guess not! I believe she thought I was the thief that took



Mr. De Wolf's dog. I wouldn't live with her for anything in the world."

"But, Jack, she's our guardian. Nora says that father wanted us to do whatever she decided."

The boy's face softened. He loved his father's memory too deeply to criticise any word or act, but the thought suddenly came to him that his father had not seen Cordelia for many years, and if he had known her better he would have hesitated before he made her guardian.

Just at this point Nora showed her broad, motherly, smiling face at the door. "D'ye know, Jack, it's time you an' Nannie were off to school?"

"So it is," cried the boy, glancing at his watch and making a dive for the door, followed by Nannie. Nora stepped aside to let them pass, and watched them from the window until they were out of sight.

"He's a fine, handsome lad," murmured the woman, "an' has the look of his father. May the Lord rest his soul; he was a good man."

Nora had first seen Jack when he was a chubby little fellow with brown curls. She had wept over Nannie, when her little life had cost that of a sweet-faced mother, and had given the boy and girl all the love that was in her big, warm, motherly heart.



When Jack came from school that day he saw several signs of his aunt's preparation for travel. Her great trunks were in the hall, and the maid was hurrying to and fro with bundles and band-boxes. Jack met Isabelle on the stairs, her eyes shiny and a bright flush of excitement deepening the color in her cheeks. Isabelle had never been very much interested in her only brother, but for that matter she had never been interested in anybody but Miss Isabelle Tenfield. The thoughts of leaving the dull life in the yellow house made her wonderfully gracious, and she smiled her sweetest at Jack, and asked where Nannie was.

When the lunch was half over, the tardy Nannie entered, and slipped into her place at the table.

"Why did you remain after the session, Annette?" asked Cordelia sternly.

Nannie blushed and hung her head. "In the grammar lesson this morning," said Nan reluctantly, "teacher asked for examples of gender——" Nannie hesitated.

"Well?" asked Cordelia impatiently.

"I said Billy goat was masculine and Nannie goat feminine, and she made me write a hundred words after school."



A burst of laughter from Jack followed this announcement, while Aunt Cordelia made no comment whatever, and Isabelle looked very properly shocked.

The rest of the meal was eaten in silence, but the glances that Miss Cordelia inflicted on her niece were more expressive than words.

It was a great surprise to Jack and Nannie that afternoon to learn that Nora was going with Aunt Cordelia. Nannie heard her aunt tell the Professor, who had called to say good-bye, that McNaughton would arrive that night.

No sooner had Cordelia departed bag and baggage than the two maids left at short notice.

"The idea of leaving us all alone in this house," cried Nan, when she and Jack talked the matter over. "Suppose burglars got in. I'll never sleep a wink to-night, I know I shan't."

"Pshaw," said Jack, "I'm not afraid of any burglars,—but I must go now, I'm in a hurry."

"Where are you going?" asked Nan, starting to follow her brother, who was half-way across the yard to the barn.

"We're going to play the 'Longwoods,'" was the answer.



"I'm going, too; I'm not going to stay all alone in an empty house," cried Nan.

Jack never heard her. He flew into the barn and in a second appeared with a bat under his arm, drawing on an old glove from which the fingers had been cut. Then he started across the fields and was soon out of sight.

Beaute, a shaggy spaniel, started after him, but Nan whistled and called, and finally caught Beaute by the collar. "You ungrateful dog," said Nan, shaking a finger at the two brown eyes that were studying her face. "I feed you more in one week than Jack does in a year, and yet you'd leave me all alone and go after him—and I pat you and say ever so many nice things, and he wouldn't look at you all the afternoon, would he? There's a little corner in your little heart for me, but all the rest is for Jack, and dogs like boys better than girls, don't they? Why is it?" With this speech, Nan started for the damp fields near the Hillside Spring to gather violets, followed by Beaute.

When Jack returned that night his left eye was badly swollen, and on the following morning it was black and blue. "You must have caught the ball on your eye, Jack," laughed his sister.



“No,” said the boy, smiling, “I did not get this black eye playing ball.”

“How did you get it?”

“Nannie, your bump of curiosity is altogether too big for your size.” This was all the information Nannie received.



## CHAPTER IV

### KEEPING HOUSE

ON Friday evening, three days after Aunt Cordelia's departure, the old yellow house displayed but one light. It burned in the sitting room, where Nannie, in a corner, was weeping softly over the righteousness of Elsie Dinsmore, while Jack sat at the table writing a letter to Burge Tebbett.

After a while Nan closed her book and walked to the table, where she read the following over Jack's shoulder :

"DEAR BURGE:

"Just a line to keep up your courage, and the good work on the *Rocket*. My newspaper business is doing so well that I have four dollars and eighty-seven cents saved. Before the summer vacation sets in I mean to have that twenty-five dollars, if I have to set up a boot-black's chair to earn it; and this reminds me of a funny incident that happened the other day. I had just started out with my papers, when I saw a little fellow set upon by two toughs in an alleyway. They knocked



him down and started in to pummel him, when I happened along.

"I threw my papers one side and struck out right and left for all I was worth. They scattered, but not before one of them gave me a nasty blow in the eye.

"You deserve any credit that belongs to the affair, because you taught me to box in good style last summer, and I have practiced all winter in the barn with the punching-bag. My blows are much harder than they were, and I can hit quicker.

"The little fellow seemed awfully grateful. He told me his name was Terry—just Terry—he has no other name, and he is a boot-black. Now what do you suppose he is going to do, but get a big chair, and have a settled place of business. He says there is money in it, and he offered to take me as partner.

"Isn't this a bully joke? I don't think I'll accept, as I hope to be partner in another business. First mate of the *Rocket* with Captain Burge Tebbett would suit me better. Doesn't that sound great?

"Yours (hoping for a line),

"JACK."

"So that is how you got your black eye, is it?" laughed Nan. "You better look out, Jack, you'll get into trouble with those street boys."

"Oh, no; I guess not. I never have anything to do with any of them, except Terry. I talk with him occa-



sionally. Do you know, I think he likes to talk to me. He's a queer little chap, and he looks hungry all the time."

"Does he look like me?" said Nan. "There must be a resemblance, because I look hungry all the time, and what's more I *am* hungry, since Nora went."

"So am I," returned Jack. "It's two days since they all went away, not a soul has showed up yet, and the rations are getting low. I wonder why somebody hasn't been here."

"If Professor Lesch knew we were all alone in this big house he'd have a conniption," cried Nan. "The first night I was scared," she went on, "but since you've promised to sleep on that rug outside my door with Beaute, I'm not a bit afraid."

Jack grinned. It was true that he had reluctantly yielded to Nan's entreaties to guard her sanctum in the manner above described, but it was for one night only. She did not know that after that he had stolen off to his own bed, and never thought of her or burglars till he felt a cold nose on his hand in the morning, and awoke to find Beaute at his bedside, telling him in dog-fashion that it was time to get up.

"Oh, for a great big slice of Nora's bread and butter," sighed Nan. "Don't you wish you had it?"



"I wish I had a good dinner," was Jack's answer; and Beaute, who had been dozing peacefully at Jack's feet, opened his eyes at the sound of the word "dinner," and sniffed. Beaute was hungry.

"I wish I had a table filled with good things to eat," said Nan. "Lots of pudding would be nice, wouldn't it, Jack, especially if it were plum—just fancy a round, fat, steaming, juicy, delicious, melting plum pudding—doesn't your mouth water?"

"Don't," said Jack, raising a hand in smiling protest. "I was so hungry last night when I went to bed, that I dreamt all night of eating things."

"Now, that's queer. I had the very same kind of a dream," cried Nan. "I dreamt I was in a room that had a lot of mantels and shelves and tables, and on every mantel, shelf, and table were ever so many pincushions; but the oddest thing about it was the fact that the pincushions were all made of ginger-bread—lovely, soft, spongy ginger-bread, and I ate them—pins and all."

"That was a strange dream," returned Jack. "Ginger-bread! Oh, don't I wish this floor was carpeted with it."

"What an idea!" cried Nan, "and suppose there were great, golden griddle cakes for mats?"



"I'd walk on my teeth," laughed the boy.

"I'll tell you what we'll do," said Nan, "to-morrow is Saturday, and we'll cook."

"What?" asked practical Jack.

"Oh, lots of stuff. We'll lay in a good supply, so that if Mr. McNaughton comes, he won't be starved. We might kill a hen, and have roast chicken."

"So we could, Nan, and that's just what we'll do. I'll take the head off that fat gray hen in the morning."

"Jack Tenfield!" exclaimed the girl, "would you be so mean?—that poor old thing that's so happy, clucking around all day. I didn't think it of you."

"Well—er, how are you going to eat her, if I don't?" asked Jack.

"I never said I wanted to eat her," retorted Nan. "Eat poor old gray-legs—it would just choke me if I did."

"Well, what hen would strike your fancy for a meal, Nan, one of those big pullets?"

"Jack Tenfield, I'm not a cannibal to eat friends—now listen, you can go up to Hitchcock's to-morrow morning and buy one already killed, then we'll roast it, and have a splendid dinner."

If you had happened to visit the great kitchen in the yellow mansion the following morning, you would



have witnessed a busy scene. Pots and pans and kettles, of all sizes and shapes, had been taken down and scattered about on the table, on the chairs, and on the floor. Sugar and salt had been spilled in divers places; the walls were decorated here and there with a slap of butter, while under and over everything in the room was flour. It powdered the tip of Nan's nose, and rested on the long lashes, causing her to wink hard.

All this excitement was due to the fact that Jack had gone to a neighboring farmhouse to buy a chicken, and Nannie was improving the hungry minutes by attempting to make a cake for the first time in her life.

She had half-filled an immense breadpan with flour and was pouring in milk and water, as if a quantity of liquid was the one thing needful. A pitcher of lemonade, left over from the previous day, was in imminent danger of being called into use to help soak the flour, if Nan's eyes had chanced to light upon it. Lumps of butter and lard were thrown in, and cups of sugar followed, regardless of measure or proportion. Nan honestly believed that the more she put into the cake, the better it would be, and raisins and currants were thrown in with lavish hand.

All at once Nan remembered that she had watched



Nora one day beating up eggs for a cake, and she decided at once to fill the cake with eggs. But the first egg dropped on the floor, and a few seconds later Nan took a slide on it and a back-somersault, that brought her up against the stove, just as the door opened, and Jack appeared with the chicken.

"You're just in time," said Nan, picking herself up. "I'm making a cake, Jack. You know the lovely cake that Nora makes. Well, I saw her beating up eggs for it—you must help—it's going to be grand."

"What shall I do?" asked the boy, delighted at the thoughts of a cake.

"Take all the eggs—every egg you can find in the house, and beat the life out of it—lots of eggs make a cake yellow, and yellow cake is lovely."

"The eggs don't make it yellow," cried Jack, "you've got to flavor it."

"Wha—what?" said Nan, startled at Jack's unexpected knowledge of cookery, "what do you mean?"

"Why, flavor it, of course," cried Jack. "I know that much about a cake. Isn't there a fruit cake and a sponge cake and a strawberry short-cake?" declared the boy, seeing Nan's dubious look. "It's what they put into the cake that gives the name."

"They don't put sponges in sponge cake. I know



better than that," declared Nan; "but you're partly right, I think," she went on, and just then her eye fell upon a pot of cold coffee. "The very thing," cried Nan. "I'll pour it in, and make coffee cake. I just love coffee cake. Say, Jack, isn't it easy to make a cake? I might have made one every day if I'd thought of it before."

"Hold on a second; my wrist aches from beating these eggs, Nan. Here they go—one, two, three!" Into the mess went the eggs, and on top of these Nan emptied a few more cups of sugar. "There, I think it's ready to go into the pan," cried the chief cook triumphantly.

"Are you sure it's sweet enough?" returned Jack. "Cakes have to be awful sweet, you know."

"I'll put in a little more sugar to be on the safe side. I suppose it couldn't be too sweet?" said Nan.

The mixture in the breadpan was next beaten by Jack, because he was "so strong," and Nan placed the baking pans on the table.

"You've got to grease those pans, Nan, or the cake will stick to them."

"I'm so glad you thought of it," returned the girl; "but stay, what shall I use to do it?"

"Butter or lard, of course."



"There isn't a speck of either left. I put it all in the cake. I'll take a piece of that yellow soap at the sink; that will do."

"Soap the pans! No, that won't do; the cake might taste soapy," said Jack.

"But it can't get inside the cake, and I'll only use a tiny bit," Nan insisted.

"I don't think soap's the thing; but there's a bottle of goose grease on the mantel. Wouldn't that be better?"

"The very thing. Let's have it," said Nan, beaming. "I didn't know, Jack, that you knew so much about cooking. I shouldn't be surprised if you could make a better cake than I."

"No, I couldn't," said the lad; "but I'll tell you what, I'll have to do it at once, or you can't bake it. I must get some wood for that fire."

"Run along, then," said Nan, "and I'll put this chicken in the other baking pan."

"You've got to clean it first," said Jack.

"Of course I'll clean it. Do you suppose I don't know that?" retorted Nan.

"Oh, I don't mean just washing it," cried Jack, watching Nannie hold the chicken under the faucet. "You've got to take out the insides."



“Ha?” said Nan, looking bewildered for a second; then her face brightened as she answered: “Oh, that’s easy enough to do. You get the wood, and I’ll fix the chicken.”

Jack rushed out, and in a few moments appeared with an armful of wood, just as Nannie gave a little squeal, at the sink.

“Oh, Jack! quick! There’s funny things in this chicken.”

Jack dropped the wood, and as he did Nan dropped the chicken on the floor and jumped away from it with a scream.

“What’s the matter?” asked Jack, picking up the chicken.

“Snakes!” cried Nan. “They’re in the chicken.”

“Go away, Nan, and I’ll clean this bird in a minute,” said the boy.

Nan willingly obeyed, and took a stand at the kitchen door, ready to run at the first sign of danger.

The chicken was finally put into the pan, and at the last moment it occurred to Nan that she had seen Nora do something else.

“Jack, get me some string,” said Nan. “I don’t know why they tie the arms and legs of a dead chicken. It can’t be they are afraid it ’ll ‘come to’ in the pan.”



Jack gave Nannie a piece of fishing line to tie the bird, and it was then put in the oven.

While the cake and chicken were baking, Jack ran to the barn to look for eggs, leaving Nannie singing in the gladness of her heart and the prospect of a good dinner.

A loud knocking on the back door brought Nan face to face with a little old man, with a bushy black beard and bead-like eyes. With hands folded on a greasy vest that was much too large for the wearer and a broad smile, he bade Nan "Good-morning."

"Dis ees Dr. Tenfield's place; yes?" asked the man.

"Yes, sir," said the girl, amazed at the sight of her visitor.

"You aixpected me. No?"

"No, sir. Yes—oh,—yes!" cried Nan, suddenly remembering McNaughton. "We expected you three days ago."

"So?" said the stranger, looking shrewdly at the girl.

"Won't you please come in?" asked Nan, trying to be hospitable.

"No, t'anks. I will walk around a leetle, shust to see."



He hobbled away from the door, while Nan made frantic signs to Jack, who was approaching with a hat full of eggs.

"It's McNaughton, at last," whispered Nan. "He asked me if we were expecting him."

"What a queer-looking old man he is," said Jack, watching the stranger's retreating figure.

"He's looking up at the barn, and all around," cried Nan. "You better run after him, and invite him to come in to dinner. It must be nearly cooked now."

Jack hurried off, but returned in a few minutes with the information that the little man had politely refused.

"Never mind," cried Nan. "He'll never know what he'll miss"—which was indeed true.

To the surprise of Jack and his sister, the little old man did not come back. They had seen him walking over the place, and were puzzled by his non-appearance all the afternoon, but it was time for Jack to go for his papers, so he dismissed all thoughts of the stranger and hurried away.

When Jack was starting out a few hours later with his papers under his arm, he met Terry. It was the first time for several days that our hero had seen the bootblack.



"Been away?" asked Jack, standing a moment.

Terry shook his head. "Been laid up; something 'ere," he said in a hoarse whisper, pointing a lean finger at his narrow chest. "I kind o' smothered up there; but I'm better."

"Terry," cried Jack, touching the lad's shoulder, "I believe you're sick; your eyes look queer, and you are as white as chalk. Go home, Terry, and get into a good warm bed as soon as ever you can."

A faint smile played over the little bootblack's wan features.

"W'y, you talk as if I had a couch o' down, and pillers, an' all that. S'posin' I don't happen to have a bed?"

"Not have a bed! Well, where do you sleep, I'd like to know!" cried Jack.

"Mebbe you'd like to know, but I bet you wouldn't like to try it," laughed Terry.

"Well, I must hurry now, Terry. But you better do what I said—go home at once and go to bed."

Jack jumped on a car and waved a hand at Terry, who stood on the curbstone, gazing after this new acquaintance, a wistful expression on his small face.

"He's a tip-topper," muttered Terry. "Wish I was as strong as half o' him." He stood in a brown study,



wondering about this boy, who seemed so different from every other newsboy he had seen. He began to picture his idea of Jack's home, with wonderfully pleasant rooms and faces about; and he thought what a great thing it must be to live like that, when a big policeman touched his arm, telling him to "move on."

When Jack returned from his paper route he found Nannie sitting on the piazza with a strange woman, whom she introduced as Mrs. McNaughton. She was a large, motherly-looking woman, with brown eyes, and a timid, rather nervous, manner. The boy and girl learned that she was Aunt Cordelia's housekeeper, and had been unexpectedly delayed.

When she left them to get supper, Jack turned to Nannie with inquiring eyes:

"I thought all the time, McNaughton was a man?"

"So did I," said Nan.

"Well, if she's Mrs. McNaughton, who was the little old man?" queried Jack.

"It couldn't have been her husband, because she's a widow; she told me so," said Nan.

"A riddle, a riddle, pray answer who can,  
If she is McNaughton, then who was the man?"

laughed the girl, as they went in to supper.



## CHAPTER V

### A STRANGE VISIT

“SAY, is your name Jack?”

“That’s my name,” replied our hero, smiling down on a small urchin, who wore a torn cap so very near his eyes that he had to raise his chin to look into Jack’s face.

“Well, I guess it’s all right,” he said. “I’d know yer by yer smile and yer dandy clothes. I guess you’re the feller wot this is for.”

He held a greasy bit of brown paper in his fist, which he passed to Jack, who opened it, and read the following:

“If you could come fer just a minuet—I want to see you and Dickey Free will show you the way.

“TERRY.”

“I suppose you are Dickey Free,” said Jack, surveying the little fellow, who raised his chin, thrust both hands into his pockets, and said, “Dat’s me.”



"Is Terry sick in bed?" asked Jack, who suddenly remembered that he had not seen the bootblack for several days.

Dick nodded.

"Well, now, listen, Dickey. I've got to deliver my papers first, but I'll meet you here in one hour, right at this spot, and I'll go with you. Do you understand?"

"Sure."

Jack hurried away, wondering in his mind what the sick boy wanted to see him about. He did not have time to go home to supper, so he wrote Mrs. McNaughton a note, telling her where he had gone, and Billy Havey promised to take it for him.

Jack flew over the ground as if his feet were winged, finished his work, and rushed back to meet Dickey.

As he approached the appointed place, there was no sign of his guide. Jack looked at his watch and saw that it was five minutes before the hour. He waited, glancing impatiently up and down the street, when the bells on a church near by rang out seven, and on the last stroke Dickey stood beside Jack as suddenly as if he had come out of the ground.

Jack could not help smiling at the sudden appearance, thinking in his own mind what a queer little chap Dickey was.



"You lead the way, Dickey, and I'll follow," said our hero, while his companion, without a word, started away at a brisk pace.

Jack was a fast walker, but he had all he could do to keep up with Dickey, who hurried from one street into another, ran over the crossings, dodging cars and vehicles, and darting around corners of streets.

After a while the crowds of people seemed to be thinning out; they encountered but a few stragglers, and, after a short walk through an alleyway, they came to a stretch of marsh land that was evidently used for a dump.

In front of one of several old sheds, which were scattered about the edge of the dump, Dickey stopped.

"He's in dere," said the boy, and was off before Jack could say a word.

Our hero pushed aside a board, used as a door, and stepped inside.

In a corner of the wretched place, on a heap of rags, was Terry. He turned his big blue eyes toward Jack, and said with a smile, "I knew you'd come, but Dickey said he bet you wouldn't."

Jack could not speak for a minute. He felt a lump in his throat, and the tears were so near his eyes that he could not trust himself to speak. He knew that



Terry was only a poor little bootblack. He had always supposed that the boy lived in some big tenement house, but never for an instant had Jack thought of such poverty as he witnessed in the old shed.

"Look here, Terry, this won't do," said Jack, sitting cross-legged on the floor, beside the rags. "You look too sick to be here all alone. Haven't you a relation, or somebody you could go to until you're better?"

Terry shook his head.

"It's awful," said Jack, looking around.

Terry's face lit up with a wan smile. "W'y, dis is very tony quarters, Jack. I moved here when I took sick. Yer see, I used to bunk in a cellar near the big market, and it was mighty cold at times."

"Have you had anything to eat to-day, Terry?"

"Oh, yes. Dickey brought me a hunk o' bread and two big bananas dat he swiped from a dago. Dey're under de clothes dere. I didn't want 'em."

"Did he steal those bananas?" asked the listening boy.

"Sure he did!"

"He shouldn't have done that," said Jack, shaking his head. "It isn't right to steal, you know."



"W'y, he wasn't caught. They never could get Dickey."

"It doesn't make any difference whether he's caught or not, it's wrong, Terry; it's breaking one of God's commandments, you know, 'Thou shalt not steal.'"

"W'y, say, Jack, you talk just like one o' them Sunday-school chaps."

"No, I don't. I wish I did, Terry, because then I could tell you all about it, so that you'd see for yourself why it was wrong. I can only tell you that it's awful mean to lie or steal. It's cowardly. You like fair play, don't you?"

"Sure!"

"Well, then, how would you like some one to steal your blacking or your brushes? You wouldn't like that, would you?"

"No, dat's sure, I wouldn't. Say, I don't believe you'd steal a thing, even if you had a good chance, now, would you?"

"Of course not," said Jack, and he smiled at the puzzled expression on the face beside him.

"You're the queerest chap I ever ran up against," said Terry, raising his head from the bed of rags, and gazing into Jack's face. "I bet you could lick the



whole crowd," he went on; "yet yer wouldn't steal if you had a good chance."

As the last word was uttered, Terry fell back among the rags, with closed eyes, too exhausted to say any more.

Jack watched him for several seconds, and when he did not move, our hero grew alarmed, and leaned over to see if the boy's heart was beating.

"I'm afraid Terry is dying," thought Jack. "I wish some one would come."

A moment later, as if in answer to the wish, Dickey appeared.

"I thought you'd be goin', and might want me to go back wid ye," said Dickey.

"I'm glad you came. Do you know of a doctor about here?" asked Jack.

"Dere's Dr. Zapponi; dat's all the doctor I know."

"Run and fetch him here as soon as you can. I think Terry is dying."

Dickey opened his round eyes, and took a step nearer the heap of rags.

"Is Terry's eyes shut very long?"

Jack nodded.

"Den he's dead for sure!"



"No, he isn't dead. He's fainted, Dickey. You bring the doctor, and he'll help Terry in a short time."

Dickey shot out of the shed like a flash, while Jack walked up and down, counting the minutes. The white face on the heap of rags seemed whiter in the gathering darkness.

A deep silence reigned in the old shed that was suddenly broken by the murmur of voices.

Jack walked to the door and glanced through the opening of the boards. Two men were approaching, talking in subdued tones; they stood for a second, then passed on. Jack looked after the retreating figures of the men, half tempted to call them back and acquaint them with the fact of Terry's illness; but as he was on the point of doing so, he saw them enter a shed a short distance away. It stood on four posts, and had the distinction of steps.

Jack glanced at the heap of rags and saw that Terry's eyes were open.

"Do you feel better?" asked Jack, stepping to the side of the boy.

Terry smiled as he said faintly, "Wish I had a drink."

Jack looked about in vain for a sign of water, and said, "Wait one minute and I'll get you a drink," at



the same instant darting out of the shed and making straight for the one he had seen the men enter. As he neared it he heard a peculiar noise. The door was open a crack, and Jack's foot was on the lowest step when he saw a sight that held him spellbound.

The interior was fitted up for a living room. It contained a table and two chairs, but the object that caught Jack's eye and held him rooted to the spot was a bull pup tied by a rope in a corner of the shed. It was Bolivar, the valuable dog stolen from Mr. De Wolf, and for whose return a reward of fifty dollars had been offered.

The two men, sitting at the table drinking from a bottle that stood before them, did not know of the boy standing perfectly still, his heart beating wildly with suppressed excitement.

Jack glanced back toward Terry's retreat, when he saw Dickey approaching, followed by the doctor.

Our hero did not enter. He hurried back just as the doctor, a swarthy, foreign-looking man, stepped into the shed. Jack felt greatly relieved at the man's presence, but to his disgust the doctor, instead of giving his attention to the sick boy on the floor, turned an angry, threatening face to Jack. "What for you send for me to come a-here in dis-a place?"



"This boy is sick," declared Jack, "and I sent for the nearest doctor."

"He would not tell me where," cried the medical man, scowling at Dickey; "he say, 'Come, come, follow me.' He say I get-a my money. Who will pay me my money—tell me dat?"

"If you will do something for that poor fellow there, I'll pay you," said Jack, producing his little pile of hard-earned money from an inside pocket. A change came over the doctor's sallow face when he saw the money in the boy's hand. Without a word he went to the side of the bed, felt the boy's pulse, and glanced at his tongue. He asked a few questions, and turned to Jack. "He's pretty seek."

"What shall I do for him?" was Jack's direct question.

"You better get him out er dis place. He must be kept warm in bed."

He wrote a prescription on a dirty slip of paper, and passed it to Jack. "Three dollar—I have great deeficulty in getting to dis-a place."

Jack paid him the money without a word, and the doctor hastily left. Our hero stood for a minute thinking rapidly. He must take Terry out of the wretched place at once; but where? The picture of his own



pleasant rooms arose before his mind, and then he thought of the numerous spare chambers in the old yellow house,—large and sunny, with every comfort,—and the warm beds that were so seldom used. He made up his mind in a flash to take the sick boy home.

“Dickey, I want you to do something else. You must get me a cab—a hack—anything will do. I want to take Terry out of this place at once. You tell the driver he’ll get his money all right—and bring somebody as quickly as you can.”

Dickey disappeared through the doorway, and once more Jack was alone with the sick boy.

“I wouldn’t talk, Terry,” said our hero, as the sick lad started to say something, “you are too weak and I’m afraid that is the reason you fainted.”

Jack walked to the door and gazed toward the place that held the stolen dog. Every nerve in his body was alert for action, as he thought of finding Bolivar, and returning him to the owner.

“I will get him,” cried Jack in his mind. How he was going to do it did not make itself clear all at once. He must look out for poor Terry first.

Thoughts in quick succession came into the boy’s mind, while he waited for Dickey, who suddenly came along with a big, red-faced man.



After a short talk with Jack, the man took Terry in his arms, and they all marched out of the shed in single file, and walked from the dump to a place where the cab was waiting. They entered it, and the man turned his horse's head away from the city, and started out to the pleasant fields, where an old yellow mansion was waiting behind the trees.



## CHAPTER VI

### A NIGHT'S ADVENTURE

WHEN Jack had told his story to Mrs. McNaughton, and the little bootblack was warm and clean in bed, our hero sat down to a hurried supper; but the picture of the stolen dog in the old shed filled his mind to the exclusion of everything else.

Jack was sorry that it was night because that was a bad time to get the dog; but he felt that if he waited until daylight Bolivar might be gone.

Thoughts of the dog slipping away, when his recovery seemed at hand, flashed into the lad's mind, until he felt that he could not wait a moment longer; and rising hurriedly from the half-finished supper, Jack got his cap and left the house.

A car was in sight, which our hero boarded, and rode to a place where he knew he could take a short cut to the marsh. Near a lamp-post, in his dark road, he glanced at his watch and hurried along to the path that led to the marsh and the dump and the old sheds. As he neared the edge of the place he stood for a



second and looked about him. It had been almost light when he had gone from it earlier in the evening, and as his thoughts were occupied at that time with Terry and the cabman, he had not noticed the marsh particularly. Now all was silent and deserted. The old sheds looked like great black specters in the gloom. There was something terribly lonely in the scene. It was a place where dark deeds might be committed, and no one ever know. Crime seemed to lurk in the shadow of the old sheds, and for the first time in his undertaking Jack hesitated. He felt a timid reluctance to advance another step. Then he grew braver, and felt that he could not go back, come what might, so summoning all his courage, he walked cautiously on, not without a thrill of fear, as he approached the shed that stood on the four posts.

When within a few feet of it, Jack could see a faint light through the cracks. He mounted the steps softly, and peered into the shed. A lighted candle, in an old cup, stood on the table, but the shed was empty. Jack felt a pang of disappointment when he did not see the dog, and pushing the door a little wider, looked in to have a better view.

As he did so, Bolivar raised himself from his corner and jumped toward Jack with a bark of joy, but the



stout rope that held him was very short, and he tottered back with a whine.

At the first sound from the dog, Jack jumped off the step and hid behind a dump-cart. It would never do to be caught that way, thought the boy, who knew when he saw the lighted candle that the men had not gone far, and might return any minute. He did not care to encounter two thieves in that lonely spot. He knew he must be very cautious, and his pulse quickened as he listened to the whines of Bolivar.

If the men should come along and hear the dog making a fuss they might suspect something, and discover his hiding place. Suddenly the dog became quiet, as footsteps were heard, and the next moment two men passed Jack concealed in his place behind the cart, and entered the shed. The boy felt that he did not get out of the way a minute too soon.

When the way was clear, Jack tiptoed from his hiding place to take another peep. As he did so, he became aware of the murmur of voices, very low at first, but gradually growing louder, till he heard every word. The men were having a dispute about the dog, and Jack, alert to catch every word that fell from their lips, heard a few words that startled him.

Once more he mounted the steps, hardly daring to



breathe, in his efforts to make no sound. As he peered through the crack of the door, he saw the men in their places at the table, with the bottle from which they frequently drank between them.

One of them was short and thick-set, with powerful-looking shoulders. He wore a coat buttoned tight to his chin, and an old derby hat that had a hole in the side about the size of a silver dollar. His companion was much slighter, and wore better clothes.

As Jack's eyes were fastened on the two men he saw the short, thick-set one bring his fist down on the table. "Yer a fool, Tim, not to take the cur back and get the fifty—yer dead sure o' that, yer ain't sure of the other, an' he won't offer any more."

"I tell you," said the slight one, "that dog is going to New York. He'd be there now if I'd had my way. Wot's fifty when you can get five times as much?"

As the conversation progressed, Jack learned that the men expected a confederate in New York to dispose of Bolivar for two hundred and fifty dollars. His heart sank when he heard that they were going to take the dog that very night.

"Le's have a look at him," said one of the men, dragging Bolivar from his corner. The dog gave a



low growl, but it changed to a piteous cry when the fellow gave him a vicious kick in the head.

Jack's fingers tingled at the sight, and a sudden daring thought urged him to jump into the shed, snatch Bolivar, and run. But cooler judgment showed him the folly of any such rash act, so he waited, more impatient every minute as he watched the proceedings of the two thieves. They had emptied the bottle, and sat gazing at the dog in a sort of stupor. After a while one of them took up the bottle and, turning it upside down, said, "Go on, Tim, fill it up again."

This led to a little argument, which ended in Tim, the slight, well-dressed thief, rising and taking the empty bottle under his arm. At the first move, Jack had darted back to his hiding place, and did not venture out until the man had passed and all was still. Then he stole cautiously back to the steps, with his heart beating faster as he peered in to see the short thief sprawled out in his chair asleep.

Jack made up his mind in a flash that now was his time. He thanked fortune that he had a good jack-knife in his pocket with which to cut Bolivar's ropes, and he opened it as he mounted the steps and tiptoed into the shed. When Jack's foot touched the floor of the shed, Bolivar gave a low bark. Our hero stopped,



cut the rope that held him, and had his hand on the dog, when the thief opened his eyes and gazed at Jack in a sort of drunken stupor.

But it was only for a second. Then he was on his feet—his broad back against the door of the shed. “ ’Tain’t quite so easy ter git out as it was ter come in; hey sonny,” he said with a leer.

Jack did not answer. A thousand thoughts flashed through his mind, as he faced the thief, the loosened dog crouching at his heels.

“ So yer was goin’ ter steal my dog, was yer? ” the man went on, enjoying what he thought was Jack’s terror at being caught.

“ Your dog! ” flashed the boy, “ you stole that dog from Mr. Ford De Wolf. ”

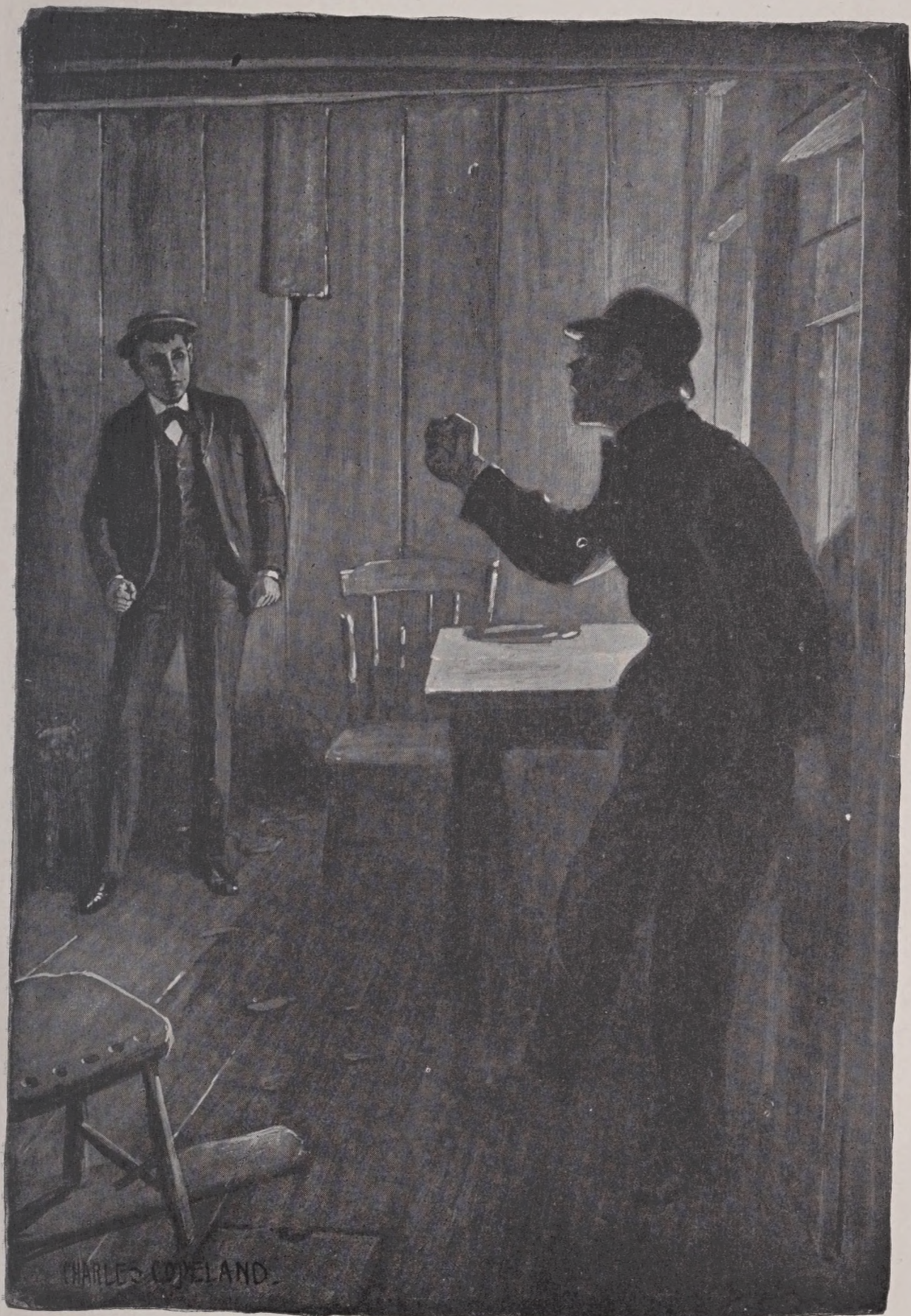
“ How’d yer know that? ” cried the thief with an oath.

Jack saw that he had made a mistake to blurt this out, and he was sorry that he had spoken. The thief clenched his fist, and shook it at the boy, cursing him roundly for his interference. “ When my pal comes back, we’ll see yer won’t make any more trouble. ”

“ What will you do? ” asked Jack, trying to look unconcerned.

“ See that rope? ” said the thief, pointing to a short





“WHEN MY PAL COMES BACK, WE’LL SEE YER WON’T MAKE ANY  
MORE TROUBLE.” — *Page 68.*







coil of stout rope in the corner behind the door that had hitherto escaped Jack's notice. "We'll beat you within an inch o' your miserable life, and den trow yer in one o' dem pools out dere on the marsh."

While the fellow had been talking, Jack's eye had gone over every square inch of the shed, and lit on a couple of boards in the side. There was a good-sized crack in one of them, on a level with his shoulder, and both of the boards were very much worn and rotten.

A desperate resolve came to the lad. He edged nearer and nearer to the side of the shed. All at once he put his hand into the crack and with a mighty effort wrenched the board from its place.

The thief guarding the door staggered toward him with an oath, his fist raised. Like a flash Jack dodged him and, reaching the table, knocked over the candle. A volley of curses rang out in the darkness. There was a wild scramble for the door, over a fallen chair. Jack reached the door, when the man caught him by the coat and pulled him back. With a twist and a turn Jack wrenched himself away, jumped over the steps, gained the ground, and started to run for his life, leaving half his coat in the powerful grip of the thief.

On and on ran the boy, and after him the infuriated man, uttering curses and calling on Jack to stand or



he'd shoot. Jack had all the advantage. The thief, whose mind was clouded, and whose legs were shaky from the effects of alcohol, had no chance with the clear-headed, fleet-footed lad, who gained at every step.

On and on they ran, when all at once Jack heard a peculiar whistle, and the next instant he was in somebody's arms.

"Hold him, hold him," shouted his pursuer, and Jack realized that he was held by the thief who had gone to have the bottle refilled. The knowledge unnerved the boy for a second, then he struck out right and left with a strength born of terror, pulled and wrenched himself till he tore himself away, and once more started to run for dear life.

The two thieves were close at his heels, the short one having caught up during his sudden capture.

Jack soon discovered that the slim thief was a runner, and the boy suddenly made up his mind to take a side course and try and lose his pursuers in the labyrinth of houses and alleys.

He headed for the nearest side street, the thief hot in pursuit. Jack reached an old fence and with a jump was over it. In the darkness he fell into an ash-barrel, from which he extricated himself and ran into the



entryway of a big tenement house, toward a flight of stairs.

By this time, the chase was getting so hot that Jack did not have time to choose his road. He must keep on or be caught. Up the worn stairs he flew like mad, almost knocking over a black-browed man he met at the top; down a long hall that all at once brought him up against a window, and stopped his flight. Jack stood in an agony of fear. He could not turn back; even then, the slim thief was mounting the stairs.

He glanced out of the window and breathed a sigh of relief when he saw the top of a back porch. He gained it at one jump and slid down the side to the yard. That jump saved him. Another alley came into view, and he ran through it, reaching the street at last.

He walked rapidly, looking back occasionally; but he was not followed. The thief had given up the chase.

All at once Jack became aware that people were staring at him, and glancing down at himself, he noticed for the first time his uncouth appearance. His cap was gone, his clothes white with ashes, and half a sleeveless coat dangled from one shoulder.



He gave himself a hurried brushing, and looked to see if his car was in sight, when it suddenly dawned upon him that he was not presentable in his present condition to ride in a car, so he hurried along, making himself as inconspicuous as possible.

After a while the crowds thinned out, and he found himself on a straight road for home. When he had walked a good part of the way, he was so thoroughly tired that he sat for a minute on a low fence skirting a field to rest.

He went over the exciting events of the night in his mind, thankful that he had succeeded in getting away from the two thieves. He was very much disappointed at his failure to capture Bolivar, and he wondered what had become of the dog. In all probability it had escaped from the shed, but he did not feel at all sure, and as the dog was too young to find his way home, Jack came to the conclusion that the thieves would search the neighborhood until they found him.

As this thought presented itself to the boy, he determined to see Mr. De Wolf that very night, and tell him the whole story. Suddenly the reward flashed into Jack's mind. Fifty dollars! What a splendid thing it would have been to have earned it.

With a deep regret at his failure, the boy jumped



off the fence and continued his way. It was growing late, and he wanted to get home. He had not taken five steps when a slight noise made him turn and look behind. At the same instant a dog jumped toward him with a bark of delight. Jack Tenfield's heart gave a bound. It was Bolivar!



## CHAPTER VII

### BUSY DAYS

SOME time after the exciting events of the last chapter Jack received a letter from Burge Tebbett that sent his spirits up at once to the most enthusiastic point.

Everything was progressing finely at Horn Point, and Burge had built a camp at Sun Island which he thought would be a jolly place to camp in for the summer.

When Jack read this piece of news, he wrote at once to his aunt and asked her permission to have his summer's outing with Burge.

Then he got out his fishing tackle and proceeded to mend it on the back porch. He had almost finished his task, when Nan appeared, and pulling his coat sleeve coaxed him to come into the library a moment.

"What for?" asked the boy, intent on his work.

"I'll tell you when we get there—it's a secret. Oh, do come, Jack."

He arose reluctantly and followed Nannie, telling her to hurry, because he was very busy.



"Now, Jack," said the girl, when she had carefully closed the door against interruption, "I'm going to let you read this poem that I've written and——"

"Is that all?" cried the lad, turning away in disgust; "you've always got some great secret that turns out to be an old poem or something. I don't want to read it, I haven't got time now."

"Oh, Jack! this one is different from all the rest. I want you to read it so that you can tell me which magazine you think would give the most money for it. You know, Jack, I *never* sent one of my poems before, and when I get the money I'll 'divvy' and we'll have a splendid time."

"Well, let's see it," said Jack, with a resigned air, dropping into a chair.

Nan put her hand down the neckband of her dress and began quite a gymnastic performance in a struggle to reach a crumpled ball of paper, near her waistband, that was plainly visible from the outside.

She stood on tiptoes and raised her elbows very high, but could not get it until Jack pushed it and held it with his closed fist, when she finally pulled it forth and passed it to her brother in triumph.

Jack smoothed out the ball and read the following:



"Wild Nature!

I fain would as a bird  
Sing wild and free,  
In minstrelsy.

"And like the wild gazelle

I'd bound with grace,  
And have my clothes all trimmed  
With cobweb lace.

"Oh, sun, I'd shine as thou,

Along the hours,  
And like the bees I'd sip  
On summer flowers.

"Is that all of it?" said Jack, looking at Nan in a bewildered sort of way, ignorant of the fact that the very best thing about Nan's poem was its brevity.

"That's all," said Nan, "what do you think of it?"

"It's awful short, Nan, but it sounds good, just like poems in books."

Nan's eyes sparkled. "It's the best thing I ever did,—came just like an inspiration ten minutes ago, and I'm going to send it, but first I want to be sure that it's all right. Now let me read it aloud to you, and see if anything could be improved on. Nan took the paper and began:

"Wild Nature!"

"Say, Nan," interrupted Jack, "haven't you got it too wild? I mean haven't you used the word



'wild' too often? You call it 'wild' nature, then you want to sing 'wild,' and there's another 'wild' some place, isn't there?"

"No, Jack, 'wild' is the right word to express it," said Nan,—which remark, as you perceive, was strictly true.

"Now, Jack, I'll read the second verse, and see if it's perfect.

"And like the wild gazelle."

"What is a gazelle, anyway?" interrupted Jack.

"How do I know?" returned Nan. "I've read somewhere about bounding gracefully as a gazelle, haven't you?"

"No," said Jack, shaking his head, "I never heard of it—it sounds to me like a fool-name. I'd cross it out if I were you."

"Cross out 'gazelle'! I guess not; why, that's the best word in the whole poem, that and 'fain' are real poetical," declared Nan, and continued to read:

"And like the wild gazelle  
I'd bound with grace,  
And have my clothes all trimmed  
With cobweb lace."

"Those last two lines are all right," said Jack, "'cause you know just what they mean."



Nan smiled radiantly and read on:

“ Oh, sun, I'd shine as thou,  
Along the hours,  
And like the bees I'd sip  
On summer flowers.”

“ I don't like the word 'sip,' ” cried Jack, “ it's silly. Why don't you say, ' And like the bees I'd eat off summer flowers ' ? ”

Nannie looked at her brother with the indulgent smile of superior wisdom.

“ Oh, no, ' sip ' is the very word,—bees don't eat like horses, you know, they just sip daintily; now, Jack, where shall I send it ? ”

“ How much money do you suppose they'll pay for it ? ” was the answer.

“ Oh, I don't know; I read one time that a noted poet, Byron, or Longfellow, or somebody, only got five dollars for a first poem, so I suppose I won't get more than that.”

“ Five dollars for that thing ! ” cried Jack in an unguarded burst of honest conviction.

“ Jack Tenfield, aren't you mean ? I might get a great deal more than five dollars; stranger things have happened, and when I get the money I'll keep it and——”

“ I didn't exactly mean it wasn't worth it,” said Jack,



trying to be diplomatic, "it may be for all I know, but it seems a great deal of money for such a little poem—only a few lines, you know. Now, if it was longer you'd get more, wouldn't you?"

"I'm not sure," said Nan. "If I thought so, I'd write a lot more verses, say twenty verses at five dollars a verse; wouldn't it count up?"

"I wouldn't write the twenty," said the boy, sorry he had mentioned it, and longing to get away, "I'd send the short one first, and when that is printed, write a long one."

"That's just what I thought of doing, Jack, and when I get the money we'll have a splendid time. I'll buy a whole quart of ice cream and some Washington pies, and we'll have a feast for one thing."

Nannie thereupon sent her poem to one of the foremost magazines of the day, and dreamed dreams of the future.

But Nannie, like Martha, in the Good Book, was "busy about many things," and poems were not the only tasks that took up her time and attention.

She had several flower beds to care for, and was working away one morning, weeding her pansy beds, when Terry appeared.



Several weeks had passed since the little bootblack had found shelter under the friendly roof of the old yellow house, and even in that short time he had improved so much that he did not look like the ragged little fellow whom Jack had taken from misery. His face was shining with happiness, though Nannie declared it was the result of an overdose of soap.

Terry was a constant source of interest and amusement to the girl, who showed him all over the old house, from cellar to garret, and took great delight in his naïve remarks.

"D'yer know what I've been thinkin'?" said the lad, watching Nannie among her flowers, that lay in a flood of sunshine.

"Something worth while, I know," laughed the girl.

"I've been thinkin' dat de sun knows his business."

"His business!' What is it?" asked Nan.

"Same as mine—de shine business."

"Terry," said Nan, looking sober, "you are not going into that business again. Mr. Ford De Wolf told Jack that just as soon as you were a little stronger he'd give you a place in his big warehouse. You'd learn the wool business, and that will be very nice—ever so



much better than being out in all kinds of weather and shining old shoes; you can't do that, Terry, because you are not strong."

"Thanks," said the boy, "you've all been awful good to me, and I'll do my best; but wouldn't I just like to make flowers grow all the time?"

"Do you like flowers?" asked the girl.

"Yes, they're great. I look at those blooms dere every day, dey're so pretty; but a good big shine, like to-day, makes them handsome."

"I love them, too," said Nan, plucking a large blue-black pansy and giving it to Terry, "they always make me think of little children's faces, there is a softness and a brightness about them."

"Dey make me think of breastpins, dandy ones," said Terry, adorning his coat with Nan's flower.

"I didn't know you were so fond of flowers, Terry, and I'll give you some to plant and care for yourself."

"A garden all to meself. Hooray!" cried Terry, throwing up his cap.

But Nan did not have the pleasure of starting the little bootblack in a garden. That very day there was a visit from the little old man, with the bushy black beard, who Nannie and Jack had supposed was Mr.



McNaughton, but who in reality was Mr. Jacob Stein. He had just closed a bargain with Aunt Cordelia, which made him the owner of the old yellow house, with its trees, and fields, and bright gardens.

The next time Nannie weeded her pansy beds she watered them with her tears.

"Oh, Jack, doesn't it seem too bad to part with this dear old place?" cried Nan a few days later. "I'm sure father never would have sold it."

"I can't say what father might have done, Nan. You see he had lost all his money."

"But, Jack, auntie has heaps of money, and she knows that father loved this place."

"Didn't you make the remark, once upon a time, Nan, that Aunt C. was stingy?"

"Yes, I did, but surely it would be a good thing—a safe investment for her, to own all this land."

"Perhaps she doesn't think so," returned the boy. "At any rate, it's gone out of the family, and I'm sorry. Professor Lesch will be disappointed, too; he hoped that it might be saved."

That night, when everything was still, and the first breath of summer seemed to blow over the trees, a girl stood looking down the long driveway and past the barn to the russet orchard beyond.



“Oh, father,” sobbed the girl, brushing away the tears that fell warm and fast.

“Why, Nan,” said a boyish voice at her side, “what are you doing here all alone?”

“Taking a last look,” said Nannie, and they went indoors together.

The next morning the boy and girl left the old yellow mansion forever.

Jack went to join his friend Burge, at Horn Point, and Nannie to begin a new life in her aunt’s summer home at Newport.



## CHAPTER VIII

### HORN POINT

WHEN Jack reached Horn Point he was met at the landing by Burge Tebbett, who had been his summer companion for almost ten years, ever since the time that the late Dr. Tenfield had bought a palatial cottage, called "Keewaydin," and the two little fellows had dug in the sand together with their pails and shovels.

They hurried through the quaint old town, with its tiny houses and old-fashioned gardens, to Captain Tebbett's cottage.

When near it Burge pointed across to Sun Island, where he had built the "shanty," as he called it, that was going to be their quarters for the summer.

Jack's face beamed when he saw it, but before he had a chance to make any comment, the old Captain appeared and gave him a hearty welcome.

"We were right sorry to hear that your folks weren't a-comin' this summer. What are you going to do with 'Keewaydin'?"



"It's been taken by some friends of my Aunt Cordelia's. They are thinking of buying it."

"Well, now, it 'll seem queer to see strange folk up thar," said the Captain.

"I expect you an' Burge 'll have some great sailing this summer," he went on.

"Come 'round to the yard and take a look at the boat. You'd never know her, all fixed up."

Jack followed Captain Tebbett into the yard, and Burge began to give a few finishing touches to the *Rocket*.

It was a ship's "longboat," decked over for'ard, which gave quite a roomy cuddy, and a thwart that was built around in the standing room aft. It was cat-rigged, with a short jib, and taken altogether the old rowboat was made to look quite like a yacht. Being well built and of good material, she was able to stand many hard knocks in her new career.

Jack's eyes sparkled as he glanced over the *Rocket*.

"Well, how do you think she looks?" asked Burge, touching her up here and there.

"First-rate; fine!" exclaimed Jack with enthusiasm. "You've done a good job and ought to be proud of it."

"I think she looks pretty fair, myself," said Burge, straightening up. "To-morrow we launch her. I



have a few things I want to carry over to the shanty and we can take them all at once."

"Aren't you going to sleep over there to-night?" asked Jack, who was very eager to begin the jolly life on Sun Island.

"Mrs. Tebbett wants us to have supper here to-night," said Burge, "so I think we might as well wait and go over to-morrow."

"Let's take a walk till supper," said Jack. "I want to tell you a bushel of news."

"I'm with you in a jiff," said Burge, darting behind the cottage.

Jack sauntered about, going over every part of the *Rocket*, till Burge came into view with a great armful of driftwood that he had gathered for Mrs. Tebbett's fire.

She appeared at the door just as the two lads were starting off and said, "You boys just git up an appetite, I'm goin' ter have clam fritters fer tea."

"Get up an appetite," said the Captain, joining his spouse at the door; "they don't have to. I rather guess it's 'high-water mark all the time,' hey?"

"That's right, Captain," said Jack, as they started for the beach to see the remains of a coal barge that had been wrecked during the winter.



During the walk, Jack told Burge about the loss of his father's fortune, and the change it would make in his affairs.

"What are you going to do now?" asked Burge, greatly interested.

"I'm going to finish at school and enter college. I haven't quite decided what I shall do after that," said Jack.

"Well, I'd like to go to college, and Mr. Wingate says I'll be ready in another year," said Burge. "You didn't know I was studying with him, did you?"

"No," cried Jack. "That's good news. What a jolly time we'll have together."

"Hold on a minute," said Burge with a smile, "I'm not going to college. I have had an offer that doesn't come every day, and I'm going to take it."

"What is it?" asked Jack, all interest.

"Do you see that black hulk out there?" said Burge, pointing at arm's length to their right. "It's the *Suzanne*, commanded by my uncle, Captain Herford. He sails for San Francisco, before the cold weather, where he is having a dredging machine built. In the spring he is through with the *Suzanne*, and will start for Alaska on the big dredger, and I'm going with him."



"To Alaska?" asked Jack. "What is he going there for?"

"Gold," said Burge. "There's millions in the water there, the creeks and rivers, for the man that can work it. It's the biggest thing of its kind that you ever heard about," continued Burge. "This dredger that is in process of construction is the property of a New Yorker. Captain Herford says it is a wonderful thing. You will probably hear him tell all about it; he comes ashore almost every day and drops in to see us.

"I want to make all the money I can this summer," the boy went on. "You see it's a big undertaking, and the Captain says a few dollars will come in very handy, so we'll see if we can make some money on the *Rocket*."

"I'd like to go with you," cried Jack, who had been deeply interested in everything that Burge had told him, "and just think, Burge, I've got fifty dollars already."

"Fifty dollars," repeated Burge, "and you've been telling me about being poor. Tell me how you made it, will you?"

"I didn't make it," laughed Jack; "at least, not in the way you mean. It was given to me."

Jack thereupon related the whole story of Bolivar,



from the very beginning, to the complete satisfaction of his friend.

They were still talking about it when a well-known sound made them turn to see the Captain at his cottage door, waving an old fog-horn at them.

Many a time Jack had taken it down from its place on a rusty nail near the Captain's kitchen door and blown on it when he was only a little fellow.

It was a merry supper party that night in Mrs. Tebbett's homely kitchen.

Burge repeated the episode of the bulldog for the Captain and his wife to their great enjoyment.

"Fifty dollars fer a dog—land sakes," said the Captain's wife. "I'd git him fifty dogs fer that."

"But not fifty Bolivars," said Jack.

"Sarah," said the Captain, shaking a crisp brown fritter, on the end of a fork, at his spouse, "dogs are all alike to women-folk, but I tell you thar's as much difference between that Bolivar that Jack tells about an' the dogs 'round here, as there is between a full-rigged clipper an' a stone sloop."

"Mebbe," said Sarah laconically, "but I'm doubtful."

The Captain swallowed his fritter and winked at Jack, till his merry eyes narrowed to mere slits.



"The most doubtful critter in the world, Sarah, is a hen."

The boys laughed aloud at the quaint manner in which the Captain screwed his weather-beaten face, and Sarah shook all over with good humor, well used as she was to these remarks.

Jack always liked to get the old Captain started on some tale of his early life, when he went whaling, but the old man did not seem inclined to talk.

After supper he lit his pipe and sat on his doorstep while Sarah watered some nasturtiums that grew in an old boat, filled with loam, and ornamented the front yard.

A few minutes later, a tall, sea-browned man joined him, and was introduced to Jack as Captain Herford, —Mrs. Tebbett's brother—of the *Suzanne*.





THE BOYS HEADED FOR THEIR CAMP TO BEGIN HOUSEKEEPING.

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## CHAPTER IX

### SUN ISLAND

THE next morning, after breakfast, the boys launched the *Rocket* and took a trial trip.

They found everything about it to their satisfaction, although Burge thought she was a little slow.

When they had sailed around for about an hour, they returned to the Captain's landing to get the things that Burge wished to carry over to Sun Island.

An oilskin suit, a pair of high rubber boots, his fishing tackle and gun, a few books, bedding, cooking utensils, a small oil stove, and a broom, made up the cargo.

When these were aboard, the boys headed for their camp to begin housekeeping.

The shanty that Burge had made on Sun Island was built of parts of an old wreck. There were two rooms downstairs, and a loft reached by a ladder.

The door, which had at one time opened into a ship's cabin, swung back toward the sides of the shanty with a slant, giving it a queer, one-sided ap-



pearance. There were several tiny windows on the sides, that had also done service on the staterooms of a vessel.

Taken as a whole, Burge Tebbett's summer residence was a quaint, jolly-looking place, and very ingeniously put together.

Jack secured the *Rocket* and took a survey of the island. It was a barren stretch of high land, rocky at one end, but grassy and level around the shanty.

Flocks of sea-birds were wont to come among the rocks, and there was good shooting in the season.

Before they carried their belongings from the boat, they swept out the shanty and gave it a pretty thorough cleaning.

Burge brushed down the sides, while Jack grew so enthusiastic over the house-cleaning that he started in to wash the small windows.

When everything looked neat, they carried in the things, made up the two beds, put the books on a small shelf, hung up the pots and kettles, and then sat down to look over the results of their labor.

"I suppose I've forgotten something, but we haven't far to go," said Burge.

Jack walked to the door and looked over the stretch of water before him. He took a deep breath, drinking



in the crisp sea air, saying: "This is great, Burge. I feel just like standing on my head. By the way, where are your lobster traps? I didn't see any."

"They are all on the other side. I've discovered a place that must be the lobsters' favorite retreat. My traps have been filled with them for the last month. We'll go out there by and by, and have a look at them.

"In the meantime, suppose we take a sail to the lighthouse."

The boys not only visited the lighthouse, but went over all the familiar places that Jack had not seen for almost a year.

Long before the noon hour the boys felt, as Jack described it, "A deep hollow within that must be filled," so they headed for the island to have dinner. Burge dug some clams on the beach and started in to make a clam stew, while Jack built a roaring fire of driftwood to bake potatoes. When they were ready he swung a kettle to boil eggs and make a pot of tea.

These viands, together with some of Mrs. Tebbett's home-made bread and butter, went a long way toward filling "the deep hollow within."

When the pots and kettles were washed and put away after dinner, the boys decided to sail again.

They passed the *Suzanne*, but as there was no sign



of life aboard, they did not pay a visit to Captain Herford.

Late in the afternoon they headed for Sun Island, and on the way went to see Burge's lobster traps. There were three of these scattered about a quarter of a mile apart.

They found the first trap they visited filled with crabs, which the boys threw back into the water. The second had several crabs and a "short" lobster. These also were consigned to the sea, and Burge began to think that his usual luck had turned against him, when he reached his third trap. On hauling it up, the boys saw five dark green beauties, squirming for more room to move around in their crowded quarters.

These were quickly placed in the *Rocket* and the boys started for Captain Tebbett's landing to give him a couple for supper.

Mrs. Tebbett was much pleased to see the boys, but would take but one lobster and in return passed them a basket of hot biscuit.

"I thought you boys would like 'em over there with your tea, especially as the Captain said he'd half a mind to go over and be comp'ny."

"Where is father? I'll take him now," said Burge.



"He's gone to the village, but I expect him back any minute."

"We'll wait for him," said Jack, and the boys went ashore.

When Captain Tebbett appeared, he had a good-sized bundle, which he threw aboard the *Rocket*, saying:

"I was going over to see how you were getting on, and there's a few things in that bundle that I jest threw in your boat that Burge clean forgot."

Then the Captain and the two boys got aboard and sailed over to the island, where supper was soon in progress.

Jack liked lobsters. They always tasted better at Horn Point than they did at home, but never did anything taste quite so delicious as the lobster supper that night in the shanty.

"I s'pose you lads feel jest like Robinson Crusoe in this here bunk, and it's a pretty good one too," said the Captain, lighting his pipe after tea, "but if Crusoe should happen in jest now," he continued, "I bet he'd be glad ter borrer some o' your canned stuff, that is, if he was still on his island."

"It must be great fun to be wrecked on an island, away off somewhere," cried Jack.



"You might find it warn't sich fun after all," said the old Captain, "it might mean sickness and starvation and death, and what's worse than all—cannibals, though there be folk," he went on, "who like the strange life in some o' them foreign places. There was Jack Lamb," said the Captain, growing reminiscent, "first mate on the *Genevieve*, 'way back in '49. He disappeared after a certain trip and everybody thought he'd been lost, or that the wild men had got 'im, but one day I met his brother Sam, and what did Sam tell me but that that fellow Jack was a-livin'—that he was king of an island and a strange people, forty miles off the coast of Africa. He'd married a native woman, and told Sam he'd done with the outside world forever. Queer chap was Lamb."

"Then there was Mullen, he was captain of a whaler for pretty nigh twenty year. He was lost for a good ten year, and everybody thought he was dead, when one day he turns up and tells a tale that would make some of these ship stories that you boys read pretty tame."

"What happened to him?" asked Jack.

"'Bout everything that could happen to mortal man in this world," said the Captain, "but there's goin' to



be a storm," he said suddenly, rising with a stretch, "that is, if my bones are as c'rect as usual.

"Yes, sir," he continued, walking to the door and glancing at the sky, "we're goin' to have a bit of a squall to-night."

"When was the worst storm you ever remember around here?" asked Jack, loath to have the Captain go when he was in a story-telling mood.

"The worst storm?" repeated the old man. "Well, now, I rather think that was the night we got Burge, nearly fourteen years ago come November."

The boy had heard the story many times, but there was always a certain interest in it. A vessel had gone to pieces on the rocks below the point. Captain Tebbett and the life-savers had put out the lifeboat in a terrible sea, but before they could reach the only man who seemed to have survived the wreck made by the wind and waves, he had been drowned before their eyes in the desperate effort he had made to save a little child, who was picked up afterward by the Captain, in a manner almost miraculous, brought up by the Captain and his good wife, and named for their only child, who had died in infancy.

Briefly, this was the story of the boy Burge who was Jack's friend. Burge liked to hear the old Cap-



tain tell the story. It started a train of thought in the boy's mind about his people, and what his real name could be, and the relationship he bore to the man who had made such a desperate effort to save his life.

He liked to dwell on the fact that Mrs. Tebbett often said, "You were somebody, Burge, for your little clothes were the very finest, and I've saved them, every one."

"Well now," said Captain Tebbett, who had been smoking away in silence, "I think I'll start home 'fore it gets any darker. It's time I turned in."

The boys rowed the Captain to his landing and returned to the shanty just as the wind changed and the rain began to fall in torrents.

It turned out to be a wild night, but the lads slept as peacefully under the tight roof of their shanty as any sleeper in all the broad land.



## CHAPTER X

### AN UNEXPECTED GUEST

THE days passed quickly at Sun Island, and the boys were very busy most of the time.

When the hotel was filled with guests, Burge and Jack had made arrangements with the manager to supply lobsters, clams, and all the fresh fish they could catch.

The summer was well on the way, however, before they made any money on the *Rocket*. Their first business trip was to carry five gushing, giggling girls, who paid ten cents apiece to be ferried to the shore. After that, there was hardly a day that they did not take somebody, and the little pile of money that the lads were saving began to grow larger.

One evening after a particularly successful day, the boys received a visit from Captain Herford.

He talked of the proposed trip of the *Suzanne* for nearly an hour. He gave glowing descriptions of the life on a big dredger in a place like Alaska, where game was plentiful. He told the boys about the fine



salmon fishing and bear hunting, and left them both more eager than ever to join his expedition.

"I've made up my mind to go, Jack. Captain Tebbett said he would go himself if he were fifteen years younger."

"I wish I could go," said Jack, "but it was my father's wish that I should go to college."

The words had hardly passed his lips when he saw Burge give a start, his eyes fastened on one of the small windows.

Jack's eyes followed and saw a girl's white face peering in at them.

The boys were on their feet in an instant, and Jack rushed to the door to find Nannie standing before him.

"Why, Nan! how did you ever get here?" cried Jack, leading her into the room.

"I've run away," said the girl with a sob.

"Run away! When? where? Tell us about it!" cried the boy, surprised and alarmed at his sister's presence there at that time of night. Nannie sank into a chair, on the verge of tears, her hat lay in her lap and the rebellious "pigtails" stood out from her ears, straighter than ever.

Burge ran to the closet and poured a glass of milk.



"Drink this, Nannie," said the boy, "you look all tired out."

"Oh, Jack, it's terrible down there, I'm so lonesome I could cry all day," said the woe-begone Nan, sipping the milk.

"Lonesome at Newport! Why, that's queer," said Jack, "I thought you'd have no end of fun."

"I don't have any fun at all. Aunt Cordelia and Isabelle go about a great deal, and I'm all alone, and it's worse since Nora's gone."

"Nora gone!" exclaimed Jack.

"Yes, Aunt Cordelia quarreled with her about me and sent her away, and she's gone to keep house for her brother, who is a widower with five children. Nora cried when she was going, and promised to write to me. And Isabelle's engaged to a man! Isn't it dreadful?" said Nan, the tears actually coming at this awful piece of news.

"Engaged to be married?" asked Jack.

Nan nodded. "He's an Englishman named Waters, and I don't like him at all, and—oh, Jack, it's terrible to live with auntie."

"Well, Nan, I suppose it isn't very pleasant, but you will have to live with her for a while."

"Why couldn't I live here with you and



Burge?" cried Nan, drying her eyes and looking practical.

"Now, Nannie, you know that is impossible. This is no place for a girl. You shouldn't have run away. It's a bad thing for a girl to do. How did you get here?"

"Isabelle gave me some money last week, and I started this morning in the train, when she had gone to ride with Aunt Cordelia. I left a note saying I was going to live with you. When I got to the point, I walked all the way to the Captain's landing, and I rowed over in the Captain's boat. I didn't see anybody around, so I thought you could take it back."

"A girl in a rowboat, alone—at night!" cried Jack indignantly. "Look here, Nan, that is the most fool-hardy thing I ever heard of, and you'll be drowned or something if you keep on. Why didn't you stay at Captain Tebbett's? I don't see what we're going to do with you here."

Nannie's lips quivered, and she burst into tears. It was the last straw, to get a scolding from Jack, when she had braved everything to come to him.

"There, don't cry," said the boy, sorry that he had said so much, "it's all right and we'll manage some way."



"Of course we'll manage," Burge answered. "I bet Nan is hungry, so first of all we'd better get her something to eat." He made a dive for the closet, and brought forth a plate and cup.

"I don't want anything. I'm going back," said tired, disappointed little Nannie, rising and going toward the door.

"You can't go back to-night," said her brother, placing his hand gently on her arm. "Now, Nannie, be sensible. I didn't mean that I wasn't glad to see you and all that, but I was scared for your sake, that's all. We're having no end of a good time, Burge and I. Here, eat some of this bread and cheese—it's Mrs. Tebbett's, and it's good."

Nan began to nibble at first, but she had the appetite of a growing girl, and in a very short time the bread and cheese disappeared. So did Nan's tears. She glanced approvingly over the shanty, and smiled at the boys. "I had no idea it was such a good place. Who made it?"

"Mr. Burge Tebbett, ship's carpenter, fisherman, sailor, etc., etc., at your service," said the boy, placing one hand on his chest and making a low bow.

Good humor was restored. For the next few min-



utes there was a merry chatter in the shanty, and Nan's laughter was the loudest of all.

The boys gave up their rooms on the "ground floor" to Nannie, while they slept in the loft.

Nannie did not sleep for a long time in her strange bed. She lay wide awake, and listened to the roar of the breakers. She pictured to herself how nice it would be to live always with Jack and Burge, and keep house for them. What good times they would have! What good times she and her brother had always had together. Happy memories of bygone pranks crowded themselves into Nan's thoughts. She remembered a time, some years before, when Professor Lesch had taken them to the circus, "to see the animals." How much they had enjoyed every minute of their stay, and yet had gone home with a pang of disappointment because he had forgotten to take them to the "side shows," where, according to the startling pictures painted in flaring colors on the bill-boards, more wonders were collected in one small space than could be found elsewhere in the wide world.

She recalled a whispered conversation with Jack the next day, their burning curiosity to see the snake charmer and the wild man, captured in the heart of Africa, who ate raw beef and was chained in his cage.



At last desire grew so strong that they had stolen away together, walked to the circus grounds, paid ten cents apiece, and really entered the abode of the marvelous. They had been in the nick of time to hear the man tell the people about the freaks.

They had looked in awe on the youth who made his dinner of broken glass, and said he enjoyed it. In Nan's eyes the bearded lady was very beautiful, while Jack was in a trance of delight over the tattooed man.

The cage of the wild man was covered with a linen cloth, but a huge piece of raw beef, stuck on the end of a pole, proclaimed his presence. Jack was so excited over this freak that when the man uncovered the cage, and the crowd gathered, he had "shinned" half-way up a post to have a good view and only came down when Nan begged him to "boost" her up to see a wild-eyed, frowsy-haired man walking on all-fours and glaring at his captor; but what Nan never could forget was the fact that when the crowd had gone, and only herself and Jack were left to gaze on the covered cage, the wild man had sneaked out and said to Jack, "Say, bub, give us a match."

Jack had been rendered speechless at this tame request from a wild man, and had snatched Nan's hand and hurried out of the tent with breathless haste.



As these memories flooded Nan's mind she thought, more than ever, that she ought to keep house for Jack. She admitted to herself that she couldn't cook very well, and with this admission the dinner of the cake and roast chicken flashed through her mind, causing a smile in the darkness at the thought of "that awful cake, like an immense leaden mass," as she said to herself. Suddenly she made up her mind to learn from Nora how to be a first-rate cook. She wouldn't tell Jack anything about it until she had mastered the art, then she would prepare a grand dinner, and give him a surprise. Immediately Nan's active mind pictured a table, all set with heaps of good things. She even printed the menu for the dinner. There would be soup, of course, and Nan, being original, decided that she was tired of common, every-day soup. She would make a wonderful "new" soup that nobody had ever tasted. Just how she was going to do this did not make itself quite clear to Nan's mind, but visions of squeezing juice from fruits, and boiling water and a meat bone all together, seemed nice and "new."

When it was ready she would pour it into the tureen and instead of a sprinkle of salt and pepper she would shake flowers on the top. "Yes," thought Nan, well



pleased at her original soup, "flowers would certainly be uncommon, at least in soup."

She went through the whole menu in her mind, and did not forget cream cakes and apple tarts, of which she and Jack were very fond.

From visions of a dinner for Jack her thoughts flew to Aunt Cordelia and Isabelle. She wondered what they would say when they discovered her flight. Perhaps they would feel very badly to think that she had gone forever. They might feel remorse of conscience, at which thought Nan felt quite a martyr, and went deep into a lively discussion between Isabelle and her aunt, in the midst of which she drifted off to a dreamful sleep, that was even more wonderful than Nan's original cooking.

She dreamt that she was living on a desert island with Jack and Burge and, in the incongruous course of dreams, Aunt Cordelia and Isabelle and Mr. Waters were there, also. Jack and Burge had discovered a real "wild man"—without the cage—on the island, and had invited him home to one of Nan's dinners. When they asked him what he would like to eat he had pointed to Aunt Cordelia and that lady had swooned, and Nannie was so horrified that she screamed.



Then she woke up, and breathed a sigh of relief to find that it was only a dream, that the sun was streaming through the small windows, and the smell of the sea was good. Nannie ran to the door of the shanty, and looked across a stretch of water that had caught a glint of the sun's gold, and was dazzling in its rippled splendor. Suddenly, her attention was called to Captain Tebbett's cottage, where some one at the door stood waving a white cloth and making gestures to her.

Nan hurried to the water's edge, and waved her hand to Mrs. Tebbett, who called to her to come ashore. The girl lost no time, but hurried to the spot where the rowboat was moored, and in a few minutes was rowing across to the Captain's landing. When half-way over, the boys emerged from the shanty, and started to follow her.

"Nannie Tenfield, how in the name o' wonder did you ever git over to Sun Island this airly in the mornin'?" asked Mrs. Tebbett, helping the girl out of the boat.

"I've been there all night," returned Nan with a smile, shaking the hand of the old lady, whom she had not seen for over a year.

"Well, well, well," said the Captain's wife, "an'



you're growin' a big girl! Why, it seems only yister-day that you was a little mite of a thing, a-playin' down there in the sand in a pink sun-bonnet; an' here's the boys."

"Any news, mother?" asked Burge, as the two lads jumped ashore.

"The Captain's had a telegram from some o' your folks, Jack, an' he's gone to the village."

"It must be from Aunt Cordelia," said Jack with a grin. "You'll catch it," he added, shaking a finger at Nan.

"We'll go in now, an' have some breakfast," said Mrs. Tebbett, "the Captain will be along by and by."

About two hours later he returned, in company with Aunt Cordelia, who looked very red and uncomfortable from her drive through the village. She was ushered into the Captain's sitting room, where she asked to see Nannie alone.

When they appeared some time later poor little Nannie looked very much crestfallen. She bade a sheepish good-bye to Burge and Jack, who had been waiting around on purpose to see what the outcome of the interview would be, then hurried away with her aunt.

There was another surprise for Jack that day be-



sides Nan's sudden appearance. Mr. Ford De Wolf moored his yacht at the Captain's landing, and had lunch with the boys in the shanty.

Jack had not seen him all summer, although the De Wolf cottage was open and Mr. Samuel came almost every week, and sometimes dropped in to see Captain Tebbett, who was a very old friend.



## CHAPTER XI

### A CHANGE OF PLANS

SUMMER was on the wane. The hotel that had been a source of revenue to the boys was closed, and many of the summer residents had gone from the Point. The boys were still enjoying their camp life on Sun Island. They had plenty of time to sail every day, and during these pleasant hours Jack often pictured to himself a cruise on the *Suzanne* with Burge.

One day the boys were out in the *Rocket*, smelting, when they happened to see an unusual stir among the crew on the *Suzanne*.

Burge, who had Captain Tebbett's glass aboard, dropped his lines, and raised the glass to his eyes. "Why, Jack!" he cried, "take a look; seems to me they are getting ready." He had scarcely said the words, when the well-known blast from his father's old horn told the boys that they were wanted at once.

They put up their fishing lines and headed for the shore, where they were met by Captain Tebbett, who



said with a smile, "I guess you'll have sailin' in other waters 'fore a great while, Burge."

"Is the *Suzanne* going to start?" asked the boy, jumping ashore.

"To-morrow morning at five o'clock," was the answer. "Captain Herford's jest been in to say good-bye to Sarah."

"But I thought he wasn't going for a couple of weeks yet," said Jack. "He said so the other evening."

"He got a telegram from the New York chap to sail at once," said the old man.

"That alters my plans," said Burge, turning to Jack. "I thought we might have some shooting together, but now I've got to hurry and get my things together. I haven't very much to take, but I'd better begin at once."

Jack agreed that Burge ought to have everything in readiness, and he started in at once to help Burge get his belongings together.

"It's too bad you're not coming, Jack," said Burge, noting the fact that his friend had grown very quiet.

"Yes," replied the boy, "I'd like it above anything else, but I might as well put it out of my mind, at least for the present. I ought to take the opportunity of



going to college, when it is offered. Never mind," he added hopefully, "we'll have a good trip some time together."

"How much money is in the treasury, Jack?" asked his partner suddenly.

"We've made almost twenty-four dollars this summer, counting in everything."

"Good enough," cried Burge, "twelve dollars will help out, only I wish it was more."

"It is more," said Jack quickly. "I've thought this matter all out, Burge, and I'm going to lend you my fifty and my share of the summer's profits, because you'll need this money."

Burge shook his head. "Why, I couldn't think of taking it; you'll need it yourself."

"Oh, no!" insisted Jack, and he proved to his friend that the latter would need the money, while a boy, having his expenses paid at school, would not.

In the end Burge gratefully took the money as a loan, to Jack's complete satisfaction. The boys had supper that night with Captain Tebbett, and spent their last evening sitting on the Captain's door-step, talking over the great event that was about to take place in Burge's quiet life.

Starting away off to the Pacific Coast, and later



dredging for gold in Alaska, was a big undertaking for a lad of seventeen.

"We'll be pretty lonesome without Burge," said Mrs. Tebbett, joining the group, when her supper dishes had been washed and put away. "Dear knows when we'll see him again."

"Well, now, Sarah, you're well used to the men-folk goin' off and stayin' awhile, ain't yer?"

"I'm mebbe used to it," said Sarah, "but it allus seems sudden and lonesome like, just the same."

"I don't believe I'll be away a long time," said Burge. "Never mind, mother, I'll come back and make you all rich," he added laughingly.

At nine o'clock that night Burge was rowed over to the *Suzanne*, while Jack stood on the shore, and watched its black hulk in the moonlight.

At five o'clock the next morning she sailed out of the harbor with every sail set in a stiff breeze. Jack waved Mrs. Tebbett's tablecloth, and blew on the old foghorn, as a parting salute.

Later in the morning he sailed over to Sun Island, and prepared to spend his first day alone in the shanty.

The smelting season had now begun, and just before noon he went fishing. His catch included about four dozen of the small fishes, with a few flounders, and a



couple of eels. He brought them all home to Mrs. Tebbett, and had quite a fish dinner with the Captain.

A few days later he received a telegram from his Aunt Cordelia to go, as soon as possible, to her house in the city. "So they have returned from Newport," said Jack to himself when he read it, and made preparation to leave Horn Point.

When Jack reached Boston, he hurried to his aunt's house, a large brown-stone mansion in one of the oldest and most aristocratic streets of the city. As our hero mounted the steps and rang the bell of his new home, for such he thought it was going to be, he could not help thinking how different it seemed, with its tiny grass plot and the black iron fence, from the old yellow mansion among the fields and trees.

The great hall was dark and gloomy-looking. The room that Jack was shown into by a tired-looking maid had an air of loneliness, in spite of its rich hangings. The boy sat on one of the grand chairs, and for the first time in his life felt out of place. He thought of poor little Nannie, who loved freedom and sunshine, shut up in these gloomy rooms.

Suddenly the door opened, and the object of his thoughts stepped into the room. "When did you get



here?" asked Nan, making herself as small as possible on a large divan.

"About five minutes ago. Aunt Cordelia sent for me—is she at home?" said Jack all in one breath.

"No, she's shopping with Isabelle. They're shopping all the time. Isabelle's going to be married next month."

"So soon!" cried Jack. "I thought it would not be for some time yet. What do you suppose Aunt Cordelia wants to see me about?"

"I haven't the least idea," said Nan. "She never talks to me about things. I'm going to be sent to a boarding school; I know that much, because Mrs. McNaughton told me. At first I thought I wouldn't like it at all, but now I'm glad I'm going away from this gloomy old house. It's stifling. Oh, Jack!" continued Nan, slipping down from her seat and going nearer, "Auntie is terribly stingy, and she's getting worse all the time. Do you know," whispered Nan, looking cautiously toward the door, to be sure no one heard, "we've had nothing but oatmeal porridge for breakfast and supper the whole week, and she's stopped buying butter?"

Jack grinned. "I thought you were looking rather thin."



"Thin! I feel like a little black ant in this house. I feel so subdued all the time that when I get out on the street I have a wild desire to yell at the top of my voice—just to get rid of a subduedness that is smothering me—that's how I feel," declared Nannie, waxing eloquent over her lot.

"I have the blues every day, too," she added.

"You mustn't feel so bad about it," said Jack, adding with a smile Nan's original lines to himself on a certain occasion:

" 'The bright side, the bright side,  
My sister, is always the right side.' "

"You must practice what you preach, Nan, and some time you and I will live together, and have a jolly time."

"I've made up a poem about this house and you and me—read it," said the budding poet, pressing a much-crumpled piece of paper into Jack's hand. "And oh, Jack, 'Wild Nature' was returned with thanks and——"

There was a rustle of skirts outside the door. Nannie disappeared like a flash, while Jack thrust her "poem," unread, into his pocket, just as Aunt Cordelia opened the door, followed by Isabelle. "How do you do, Jack?" said his aunt, while Isabelle ex-



tended three fingers, and then proceeded to take off her gloves. "I would like to see Jack alone," said Aunt Cordelia, turning to Isabelle.

When they were alone Cordelia took off her bonnet, and sank into the nearest chair. "Well, Jack, I hope you have had a pleasant summer. You are very much tanned, and I cannot say that it has improved you. If there is one thing that I dislike it is this black and tanned appearance that some city people take on in the summer. However, I did not bring you from Horn Point to talk about your looks; there are some very important matters that I wish to discuss."

After making this little speech, the lady turned, in a business-like manner, and said: "You thought of going back to school this fall, did you not?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"And entering college, later on, at my expense?" Jack felt his face burn. There was something in his aunt's voice and manner that he resented, though he could not tell the reason.

"Now, Jack, it is with much regret that I must tell you that I shall not be able to send you to college. Your sister is about to be married, and as she was left absolutely penniless, owing to carelessness and lack of forethought on my brother's part, I shall have to



spend a great deal of money on her. She must have a wedding as becomes my niece, and I shall give her a trousseau suitable to the position she will occupy, as the wife of a wealthy and influential man."

Aunt Cordelia paused for several seconds, waiting for Jack to speak, but the boy remained silent.

"I am not sure that I approve of a college education for you, anyway," she went on. "Your father had all these advantages, and he was a miserable failure."

As the words fell from her lips, Jack's face flushed hotly, and he looked his aunt squarely in the face.

"I don't think my father was a miserable failure, Aunt Cordelia," flashed Jack with boyish indignation. "He was the best man that I ever knew, and I hope I may be just like him."

"Not a failure?" said the woman in a questioning tone. "Why, you know very well that he died in poverty—he did not have a cent."

"He did good to everybody, and everybody loved and respected him. Money isn't everything, and I didn't come to hear my father's memory insulted," cried Jack, rising and growing more indignant every minute.



"Jack, you forget yourself—you forget who I am," said Cordelia with great dignity.

"No, Aunt Cordelia, I am not forgetting who you are. My father left you the guardian of his children, thinking that you, being a very rich woman, with no ties, would do for us as he would if the circumstances were reversed, but my father was mistaken."

"Sir! you are impudent to me, who intended to benefit you; but now, not a cent, not one penny of my money shall be wasted on such a boy."

"I don't want it. I can work," cried Jack, and without another word he left the house.





"I DON'T WANT IT. I CAN WORK," CRIED JACK. — *Page 120.*







## CHAPTER XII

### OLD FRIENDS

THERE was a lump in Jack's throat as he ran down his aunt's steps, and it was an effort to keep back the mortifying tears. It was not that he had quarreled with his aunt, or that he had lost the means to obtain a college education, that caused the pangs of bitter disappointment. What hurt the most was the fact that if he had only known of his aunt's intentions a week earlier he might have gone away with Burge on his trip to the Pacific.

He had taken it as a matter of course that he was to go to college, and he blamed himself for so doing. Visions of the good times he might have had on the *Suzanne*, with the companionship of Burge, arose before him as he walked rapidly on, not caring whither, till at last he could bear it no longer, and he threw himself on a seat in the Common and gave himself up to his own bitter thoughts, the tears very near his eyes.

After a while he grew calmer, and he suddenly



asked himself what he was going to do. It was too late to start for Horn Point, and he would never go back to his aunt. He began to wonder where he could spend the night. He arose and sauntered slowly up the street, with hands thrust deep in his pockets, gazing in an absent sort of way into the shop windows. All at once his eye was fascinated by a face that wore a very broad smile, showing a set of white teeth.

Jack stood on the street, and there in the window of a great florist's shop was Terry, wiping the glass and winking hard at him. Jack's sober face broke into a smile, and Terry left his place in the window and appeared at the door.

"Well, dis is what I call a chrysanthemum—a big thing," said Terry, shaking Jack's hand, the white teeth still very much in evidence. "How's all your folks?"

"They are all well, thank you," said Jack, and added, "I thought you were working for Mr. De Wolf; I did not know you were here."

"I'm not dead sure of it meself, sometimes," returned Terry, "so I raise me right and kick me left"—suiting the action to the word—"to see if it's de real thing. Mr. Ford De Wolf got me dis job. Yer see, first he gave me a place in his big warehouse filled with



wool. Well, I guess he found out dat dere was more wool in me head dan dere was in de shop. Now, Mr. De Wolf, every day he came into his place, he used to wear a big pink in his button-hole—a fresh one every day. He used to throw away de old one in de waste basket, an' I used to get it, and wear it, and by and by put it in an old can o' water. Well, pinks keep a long time, an' one day I had de old tomato can chuck full o' beauties, an' he sees it, an' asked me about it, an' asked me if I liked those blooms, and den he talked about flowers an' about de wool business, an' two days after he got me dis job—an' dey think he's just de stuff here. Oh, it's easy; five per, an' a dreamy bed."

"Why! do you sleep here?" asked Jack, with sudden interest.

"Sure! Got a dandy room downstairs; got everyt'ing but a valet—dey couldn't find one to suit me, so dey——"

"Say, Terry," Jack broke in, "do you suppose I could sleep here to-night?"

Terry looked serious for the first time, noting Jack's earnest face. "D'you mean it?"

"Yes, I mean it," said Jack, and just at that instant Terry was called by some one."



"Hang around here to-night, an' I'll fix it," whispered Terry, going into the shop.

Our hero walked about for another hour or more, and was very glad to find Terry awaiting him when he returned to the florist's shop, where he spent a very comfortable night in Terry's quarters.

Jack arose very early to help Terry with his duties. The former bootblack was so delighted to know that he had shared his lodging with Jack, that he stood on his head from sheer good-feeling.

"I'm going out now fer a minute, but you stay right here till I come back," said Terry, darting out of the way before Jack could say a word. He appeared a few minutes later with a covered tray, which he set down on a large box that served as a table, and, pointing to a stool with a knife, invited Jack, with many bows and gestures, to sit down to breakfast.

"Dis repast might be from Young's, an' den again it might not," said Terry, uncovering the tray with a flourish. "De surest way ter find out is ter pitch right in, an' by dat time yer won't care. Come on, Jack; coffee and rolls fer two—pie fer six."

Terry's good humor was infectious, and Jack thoroughly enjoyed the situation. "Do you eat pie for breakfast?" asked Jack, shaking with laughter at



the grotesque faces the boy was making in trying to cut it.

"Breakfast, dinner, and supper," replied Terry, swallowing a huge mouthful. "Dere were days dat I was poor and ignorant of mince, apple, prune, and squash, but now, ladies and gentlemen," said Terry, addressing an imaginary throng, "behold de Jay Gould of pie-alley."

The feats that Terry performed with knife and fork were little short of marvelous, and had the former been anything but the dullest Jack would have looked for an accident. When Terry had cleared away everything to his satisfaction, and told Jack more about his good fortune, our hero took leave of the boy with many promises to come again.

Jack, who had been making up his mind to return to Horn Point and talk over his plans with Captain Tebbett, took a car for the wharf, and was soon on the way to his friends. During the sail to the Point he thought of his change of plans and altered fortune. The disappointment of not going with Burge rose uppermost in his mind, and he wondered if by any possible means he could reach the *Suzanne*.

When the ship reached San Francisco she would be in port for a few days, but *when* would she reach



San Francisco, was the next question. A wild hope flashed into Jack's mind for an instant, that he might be able to reach San Francisco, and head off the *Suzanne*. But, in order to do that, he would have to travel across the continent, and how could he do that with only a few cents in his pocket? Full of conflicting emotions Jack arrived at the Point, and took the well-known road through the village to the Captain's cottage.

Jack was doomed to another disappointment at the end of his journey. He found the little cottage all closed up, and learned from a neighbor that the Captain and his wife had gone on a short visit to a relative in another town. There was nothing for Jack to do, but start back to the city, and during the sail he made up his mind to try to get work at once.

A few hours later he walked slowly down Atlantic Avenue, watching the docks and the big ships with wistful eyes. He had gone but a short distance when he saw a group of men standing around a dog. Jack hurried his steps, and joined the group only to find his old friend Bolivar the center of an admiring circle.

"Hello, Bolivar!" cried Jack, patting the dog's head, who stood on his hind feet and tried to lick Jack's face.



"Is it your dog, sonny?" asked a big 'longshoreman who had been trying to read the name on the dog's collar.

"No, sir, but I know the owner. Here he is now," said Jack, as his eye fell upon Mr. Ford De Wolf coming toward them.

"Well, Jack! found him again, did you?" said Mr. Ford. "He got out of the office about five minutes ago. I thought he couldn't have gone far."

Bolivar's master walked along with Jack, the dog following closely at their heels. "I brought him in town to-day, because a friend of mine is going to keep him for a week, while I'm away at the races."

"The races?" questioned Jack, looking up with interest.

"The boat races, you know, at Pullman, the national regatta—you've seen them here in Boston, of course."

"Oh, yes," said Jack, "I saw some races on the Charles a few years ago; they were fine."

"Would you like to come out there with me?" asked Mr. Ford suddenly, looking at Jack's bright face.

"Yes, sir, very much," answered the boy promptly, then, of a sudden, Jack remembered that he didn't



have a cent, "but I don't think I could go, thank you." They had reached Mr. De Wolf's office, and the man had noticed the boy's manner. All at once he understood.

"Jack, you mustn't refuse an invitation to see some fine races; you must come with me. Why, this is your vacation, isn't it? I'll send a line to your aunt, and—won't hear a word," he added, smiling, as Jack started to explain; "it's just what a boy like you will enjoy."

Jack could hardly believe his good fortune. He went into Mr. Ford's private office, where he brushed his clothes, and made himself look as well as possible. Then he went to dinner with his friend, and a few minutes later was on his way to the train, which steamed out of Boston at three o'clock that afternoon for Chicago.



## CHAPTER XIII

### A JOURNEY AND A REGATTA

WHEN the train was fairly on its way, Jack had quite a long talk with Mr. De Wolf about his future plans. He told his friend about Burge and the trip on the *Suzanne*, also of his own change of plans, without, however, mentioning any words or acts of his Aunt Cordelia.

"I suppose you would like to see Burge more than anything else in the world, just at present," said the man with a smile.

Jack smiled, too, as he answered, "Yes, but that, of course, is impossible. I should have to go to San Francisco."

"Well, you are going to Chicago; that is a great deal nearer to him than Boston," and with the words Mr. Ford De Wolf smiled again, and changed the subject.

Jack made the acquaintance of a lad about his own age, who was to be the coxswain of the crew, called



"Foxy" by the young men who were going to take part in the races.

Our hero was full of interest at the novel sight of a long, eight-oared shell in the forward car, laid on stretchers, supported by the arms of the car-seats, to be used in the great amateur race by the "Orioles" against the "Atlantis," on Lake Calumet at Pullman. The young athletes in charge of the boat were always ready to answer Jack's questions about racing, and shells, and rowing.

Jack confided his admiration for them to "Foxy," and also told about the school crews he had watched from the banks of the Charles at home in Boston.

The afternoon and evening were spent in this new-found company. Then, after a cordial good-night all around, Jack returned to the sleeper in the section he occupied with Mr. Ford De Wolf, where he slept soundly in spite of the unusual motion. In the morning, it was quite a new experience for Jack to wash his face and hands while speeding along at the rate of forty miles an hour.

While doing so he happened to glance out of the car window, as the train slowed up, and he saw a sight that filled him with wonder. Near the edge of a pine forest, about a quarter of a mile away, and



fully seventy-five feet above his head, was a large ocean steamship.

"What's that?" cried the boy, hardly willing to believe the evidence of his senses.

"Guess you haven't traveled much, my boy," said an old man, smiling at Jack's astonishment.

"No, sir, I haven't," was the answer.

"That," said the old man, "is a steamer, on the way from the Great Lakes to Europe, and is now in the great Welland Canal." He explained at some length about them, and gave Jack a deal of information on the subject.

Later in the morning while Jack was at breakfast, one of the train hands entered the dining car, and announced that the train was approaching Niagara Falls, and that it would stop at the station, "Falls View," for the passengers to see the Falls.

Jack was one of the first to be out and across the track for a full view. As he looked across the chasm at the immense body of water, falling from a height of over one hundred and fifty feet, and sending up a spray or mist much higher than the falls themselves, he was filled with wonder.

He suddenly felt a touch on his coat-sleeve and, turning, was greeted with the smiling face of "Foxy,"



who looked very jaunty in his white duck trousers, blue striped outing shirt, and schoolboy cap, perched on the back of his head. The roar of the falling water drowned the sound of their voices, and only now and then could they hear what each other said.

The sight of the little steamer, *The Maid of the Mist*, that makes the trip to the foot of the Falls, and out into the mist, only to be swept sideways and back almost to the starting point, moved Foxy to say, "I wouldn't like to steer an eight in that water, you never could keep her head up."

Jack's experience in piloting the *Rocket* made him agree with Foxy that it would be impossible for a small boat to live in such angry waters.

When the signal "All aboard" rang out, all went back to the cars. In a short time the train had resumed its journey, and the passengers settled themselves for a long day's ride. While Mr. De Wolf read from a thick red book that Jack noticed for the first time, our hero studied the book of Nature, as seen from a car window. About midday they came in sight of a river, and followed it for some length. As the train slowed up, Mr. Ford De Wolf told Jack that they were about to cross the Detroit River. The train moved more slowly and, after a great deal of



backing and halting, everything seemed to grow suddenly still. The train had stopped, but Jack was conscious of a swaying motion that he couldn't account for, and asked Mr. Ford about it.

This genial sportsman had purposely kept Jack in ignorance of what was happening, in order to enjoy the better the surprise he had in store for the young traveler. He led Jack to the rear car, where through the open door our hero saw a large sheet of water churned into foam. To his surprised inquiry, Mr. Ford explained how the whole train, engine and cars, had been taken aboard an immense ferryboat, and transported across the river from Canada to the city of Detroit.

You may be sure Jack was out of the car and on deck to see all he could from the restricted space on the boat. In a short time this novel water trip was over, and after much clanging of bells in the engine room of the ferryboat, it was safely moored in the slip, and when a section of railroad track on shore that worked on two immense hinges had been adjusted to fit the rails on the boat, the locomotive started with part of the train for the shore, and after going a short distance, backed and connected with the remaining part of the train.



The journey on land was resumed, and Jack noticed as they sped along the names of the stations, which he recognized as names he had noticed in the papers he had sold.

The boy busied himself looking at the country through which he was passing, noticing many new things about the houses and buildings on farms and in the towns. While going through a newly settled part of the State of Indiana he saw some animals running along the side of the track in the woods.

"What are those?" cried Jack, turning to a sturdy-looking young man, who was also taking in the sight.

"Them's hogs; ever see any before?" was the ungrammatical answer.

"I never saw any like those before," replied Jack, whose acquaintance with "porkers" was limited to the great, fat, white occupants of the pens on Hitchcock's farm. He did not readily recognize the species in these long-legged, narrow-bodied, black animals, that easily kept pace with the train, which had slowed a little in going over a new section of track.

The young farmer told Jack that the black hogs were allowed to roam through the woods, feeding mostly on nuts and roots, and on such food as nature supplied. At certain times of the season they were



gathered in droves, driven to the railroad, and shipped to the immense pork-packing houses in Chicago.

“That nice lean bacon that you eat for breakfast,” added the young man, “comes from these same woods or ‘hog-runs.’”

Towards evening the train approached the city of Chicago, and very soon arrived in the large station of the road. Mr. Ford had been invited by the oarsmen to travel in their private car to Pullman and, as he did not care to stay over night in Chicago, he gratefully accepted their offer.

In a short time they arrived in the small, model city, where the houses are all alike. When they reached the pretty little hotel, where they had intended to stay, Mr. Ford was very much surprised to learn that there was not a room vacant in the house, but was told he could have a section in the sleeping-car on the private track of the car-building company at the foot of the hotel lawn.

A colored porter, carrying a railroad lantern, conducted them to their quarters, and Mr. De Wolf, who had traveled much, admitted to Jack that it was the most novel hotel he had ever “put up” at. The cars were stationary, so that there was no unpleasant motion to disturb their repose, and, with the doors



and windows open wide to admit the cool breezes from the lake, everybody was made comfortable.

In the morning they had breakfast at the hotel, and immediately repaired to the boat-house on the shore of the lake. Jack enjoyed the sight of the oarsmen, in their shells, practicing for the contests that were to take place in a few days.

In a short time Foxy appeared, and took Jack under his care. He explained how the outriggers were attached to the eight-oared shell and the boat made ready for rowing. He also explained the system and discipline imposed upon the members of the crew, in order that they might do justice to themselves in the race, and win glory for their club; in other words, "system" and "discipline" were necessary to get the best results; which is true of a great many undertakings, as well as a rowing contest. Jack was much impressed by all that Foxy told him, and decided that it was not quite as easy and pleasant as he supposed.

He told Mr. De Wolf what he thought about it at dinner, and the man replied that anything worth getting in life was accomplished only by hard work. He also took this occasion to speak upon his favorite pastime, that of rowing, telling Jack that it was one



of the finest exercises in the world for building up the body.

The next evening Jack attended the yearly meeting of the rowing association, where he listened to debates and arguments by the officers, who were all fine-looking men, who in past years had been oarsmen, and rowed in just such races as they were conducting at Pullman, and were now speaking in the interest of a younger generation.

At last the morning dawned that was to usher in the day of the great regatta. People came from all the country around Pullman to witness the contest. Several "fakirs" and catch-penny shows arrived that were novelties to Jack.

The first day's races were rowed, and during the excitement Jack was not slow to proclaim himself for a crew or sculler that had taken his fancy. At dinner that evening the first day's races were the one subject of conversation. Later in the evening our hero attended the convention, where Mr. Ford De Wolf had been invited to speak. He complimented the young oarsmen for their good work and self-denial in training, and remarked that he was pleased to see them helping to make the pastime of rowing one for a gentleman to indulge in.



The following day was spent much like the previous one. There was, however, a little incident that amused the boy very much.

He had been attracted to a tent in front of which a man with a round, wrinkled face was standing, about to tell the people the merits of his show, but Jack was pained to hear the man talk in hoarse whispers. He made many gestures, and every effort to be heard, but most of the people gave him but an indifferent glance and turned away. All at once Foxy and his crew came along, and they too stopped for a minute to hear the man's story, but it was almost impossible, and every time the sick showman opened his mouth, any one could see that it cost a painful effort.

Suddenly Jack saw Captain John McClintock of the Orioles make his way toward the showman and enter into a whispered conversation with him. In a few minutes it was evident that something was going to happen. The man descended from a small stand in front of the tent, from which he had tried and failed to attract patrons, and the big captain mounted in his place.

He beckoned to his companions, and the whole crew moved up, when Captain John told them in a few



words he was going to "run" the show, and help the sick man out.

A hand-organ was brought from the tent, and Captain John began to beat a big bass drum, while one of his companions played on the hand-organ.

In a short time a large crowd gathered, whereupon the big captain put aside his drum, the hand-organ became silent, and Captain John McClintock, the finest-looking and most popular member of the crew, addressed the public.

"Hear, hear, hear," began the deep-chested captain, "listen to what I am about to tell you. In yonder tent, my good people, is the rarest, the most wonderful, the most marvelous freak of nature. Nothing in this world is quite like it, and if I were to tell you, ladies and gentlemen, what Professor Markin has done to secure this wonderful attraction for this day——" Here the captain paused, while the crowd increased in numbers, and other oarsmen appeared, urging him to speak louder, and give a more lengthy preface to his attraction. "Ladies and gentlemen," continued the big captain, "thousands of dollars have been spent, lives almost sacrificed, and for what, ladies and gentlemen?—to bring here to this model city of Pullman—a cow with a double udder."



A roar of laughter greeted this announcement, while the captain continued to expatiate on several minor attractions. The people began to respond by buying tickets at ten cents apiece, and in a very short time the tent was filled to its utmost capacity. Captain John McClintock stepped down from his stand, but before he could hurry away with his crew the sick showman thanked him with tears in his eyes for the helping hand he had given.

"I've a wife and children, young man," Jack heard him whisper, "and they'll bless you for this day's work. Luck has been against me, but, thanks to you, I'll be all right for a while."

There had been a twofold motive in the action of the captain. It was true that he had felt pity for the unfortunate man, who was hardly able to speak, but there had also flashed into his mind the thought that his action would take his men's thoughts away from the coming contest, and thus relieve the strain and tension that precedes a big race, and often retards the best efforts of the contestants. Everybody seemed to think that the coming race would be a hard-fought one, and Captain McClintock knew that his crew were nervous, in spite of a calm exterior.

Jack had been thoroughly interested in the races



that afternoon, but it was the last one and the finest of the regatta that claimed his closest attention. The boy was in the boathouse, watching every movement of the crews getting ready for the big race.

When the moment arrived the voice of Captain McClintock rang through the boathouse. "To your places! Ready!" Instantly each man grasped his outrigger with one hand and the seat in the boat with the other, lifted it from its resting place, walked to the edge of the float, and placed it gently in the water. Then, without any confusion, each man took his oar, placed it in the rowlock, and at another word of command, stepped into his place in the shell and was seated.

Foxy, the coxswain of the Orioles, was the last to get in. He placed the tiller ropes over his head and in front of him, so that he could pull on the lines with both hands and his body as well. He adjusted his megaphone by means of an elastic band around his head, and gave orders to shove off.

At his word the whole crew bent to their oars and worked like a piece of machinery. Jack had been so absorbed in the doings of the oarsmen and admiration of Foxy that he did not notice Mr. Ford standing beside him.



"Pretty good crew, that," remarked the man, and then informed Jack that he had been invited to follow the races from the official steam launch. Jack followed his friend aboard, and the launch was soon heading for the starting line of the race, a mile and a half up the lake.

When the crews of the "Orioles" and "Atlantis" were on the line, listening to instructions from the official starter, Jack secured a place on top of the awning over the steersman of the launch. Here, secure from observation, the boy had a fine view of the contest.

All at once the starter cried, "Are you ready?" immediately followed by the crack of a pistol, which was the signal to start.

The sixteen men bent their bodies as one man, their oars gliding through the water, their boats forging ahead under the firm, even strokes from the hardy oarsmen.

It was an effort for Jack to remain quiet. He wanted to shout encouragement to Foxy, as the boats sped down the course. First one crew was ahead, then the other, the men straining every muscle as they moved on their sliding seats and gripped the water with the blades of their oars.



Very soon it looked as if both boats were tied together by some invisible means. The men rowed as hard as they could, but neither boat could gain the slightest advantage over the other. Every man in perfect form, the movements of their bodies as regular as a well-adjusted piece of machinery, they sped onward, leaving a trail of foam in the blue waters of the lake.

It seemed hours to Jack that he had been watching this fascinating scene, hoping that one of the boats would get ahead of the other, but they kept right on with the same even stroke, the same well-regulated movement of the body and oars. The sun's rays shone on their bronzed arms, moist with perspiration, making them look like burnished metal, and in the distance one could almost imagine he was witnessing a wonderful piece of mechanism.

All at once a sound came over the water. It was Foxy crying, "Now! now! now! make it a dozen." The crew responded, keeping time of the stroke to Foxy's voice. The extra effort sent them a trifle ahead, but almost immediately the other crew made a similar effort, and once more the boats were even. For over a mile and a quarter these positions of the crews were maintained, while the impatient



crowds on the banks cheered and urged them onward.

They were now entering upon the last quarter of the course. Jack heard some of the officers on the launch declare that it would be an even finish or a "dead heat."

Both the young coxswains were encouraging their respective crews to greater effort, but it was still "anybody's race"; the bows of the boats see-sawing, as one crew dug their oars while the other was reaching for the next stroke.

Jack was growing nervous, inwardly wishing he could give Foxy one good push from behind, to send his boat ahead, if only for a foot, and break the spell that seemed to hold the boats together.

While he was thinking of it, he suddenly saw Foxy's right arm shoot out in front higher than his head. The Orioles saw the motion, and, with one mighty effort, every man seemed to straighten out, heads and shoulders were thrown back, and when the oars struck the water on the next stroke, it seemed to lift the boat out of it and send her fully six feet ahead of the Atlantis, Foxy calling in tones measured to the stroke, "one, two, three, four, five, six," and his crew stopped as a man. There was a boom from a big



gun, a flag dropped on the shore, and a mighty shout from the crowd as the Orioles crossed the line winners by a scant five feet!

When the defeated crew rowed over to the Orioles to congratulate them upon winning, and, in return, receive compliments for the plucky race they had rowed, the crowds cheered again and again, the crews cheered each other, and the great regatta was finished.



## CHAPTER XIV

### JACK HAS A SURPRISE

THE last night of the great regatta, while Jack was enjoying the sleep of healthy boyhood, his friend and admirer, Mr. Ford De Wolf, was planning in his own mind a surprise for our hero.

He was a good deal of a boy himself, was Mr. Ford, and that is the reason he understood boy-nature. He had enjoyed Jack's enthusiasm on the trip and during the races very much, and had listened with interest to the lad's praises of Burge, sympathizing with Jack's disappointment in Burge's departure on a long voyage.

As the man sat on the hotel veranda thinking of Jack, he suddenly recalled the wistful expression on the boy's bright face when the subject of starting for home had been mentioned.

"Poor little chap," mused Mr. Ford; "he's in Chicago, and that is so much nearer San Francisco than is Boston, that he is loath to leave it. I suppose he would be the happiest lad in Christendom if he could go there."



Mr. De Wolf watched the still waters of the lake, and recalled many happy excursions of his own boyhood.

What a happy boyhood it had been, and how dear to him now were all those who had contributed to make it so!

"Why shouldn't Jack go to San Francisco?" thought the man suddenly.

"He's a boy in a thousand, honest, reliable, and manly; the journey will do him a world of good. Here am I, a rich man, and he is the son of a dear friend. I can make one boy happy, and I'll do it. It is too bad that I cannot go myself, but Morley is there, and he is just the one to look after the boy, and show him about. I'll extend this little pleasant trip a few weeks, and then my friend Jack can return to Boston ready for work."

So saying in his mind, the man arose and entered the hotel to write a letter to an old friend in San Francisco.

The next morning, after breakfast, while Jack was having a final view of the boathouse at Pullman, Mr. De Wolf approached, with his usual happy smile.

"Well, Jack, since you are just burning to see that sailor, Burge, I'll tell you a something that occurred to



me last night. I'm thinking seriously of sending you to San Francisco with a letter to deliver to a friend. How would you like to do it?"

Jack Tenfield's face showed the delight he felt at this unexpected proposal.

"I'd like it, thank you, sir," cried the lad earnestly. "I know that I could find my way anywhere."

"Well, I'll see about the trains, and be back shortly," said Mr. Ford, turning to go.

Jack wanted to stand on his head from sheer joy at the thought of what was before him. Going to San Francisco. A meeting with Burge, and, after that, who could tell what might happen? Oh, the joyous anticipation of it!

In the midst of these thoughts Mr. De Wolf appeared, and handed Jack a sealed letter.

He was just on the point of telling the boy something when a negro porter appeared, saying:

"The express to San Francisco leaves in ten minutes, sir."

"So soon!" exclaimed Mr. Ford. "I thought we would have a good hour yet. Hurry, Jack; you haven't any luggage to bother about, but we'll start at once."

When our hero was seated in the train, Mr. Ford



had hardly time to give him his ticket, and slip something into his pocket, when the train began to move.

There was a hurried good-bye, and the next moment Jack was rushing toward the Pacific at express speed.

He sat looking out of the window, going over the recent events at the races in his mind. His thoughts dwelt on Mr. Ford's generosity, and Jack hoped to be able to do something, sometime, to show how much he appreciated all that his friend had done.

He was glad to think that he was carrying a letter of importance for Mr. Ford, not realizing that it was merely a letter of introduction to a friend, whom Mr. Ford knew would look out for the lad in a strange city.

Jack put his hand in his pocket to look at the address on the letter, which had hitherto escaped his notice, but, instead of the letter he pulled out a small roll of bills.

His eyes opened very wide when he saw it, and knew that that was the thing that Mr. Ford had slipped into his pocket just as the train was ready to start.

What a splendid time he would have, and when he met Burge they could do ever so many things together.



This started a new train of thought in Jack's mind, and he forgot all about the letter in his pocket, while mile after mile of pleasant country was passed, and away over the hills Jack could see the red sun sinking lower and lower, until there was only a glow in the sky, and at last darkness.

He was still in a reverie when some one touched his arm, and said something about supper.

When Jack sought his "sleeper" that night he did not realize how tired he was until his head touched the pillow, and he was soon sleeping soundly.

The night passed without incident, and the next three days were full of interest for a bright boy who was having his first realization of the wide extent of our country.

The last night, however, was very different. The boy did not know how long he had been asleep, when he felt a sudden shock, and awoke to find himself on the floor of the car, while all around him was bustle and confusion.

His fellow-travelers were sprawled about, every one talking at once, and no one able to tell just what the matter was; but the car had turned over on its side, and the people began to crawl through the windows to safety.



Jack lost no time in getting outside, where it was discovered that the train had run into a freight car, which had struck it on the side.

Fortunately no one was hurt, but in a few minutes the passengers learned that they had not left the train a minute too soon. It was suddenly discovered that the car was in flames, and the terror-stricken people thanked God that they had escaped a terrible fate.

Jack found himself in what seemed to him a deserted stretch of country, with groups of people standing around, asking questions and wondering where they had stopped.

"Do you know what time it is, sonny?" asked a voice at his elbow, and Jack turned to a short, stout man, hatless and shoeless.

Jack started to put his hand in his coat pocket, when he suddenly recalled the fact that his coat was hanging near his berth in the burning car.

The boy turned pale as it flashed upon him that the roll of bills and Mr. Ford's letter were there also.

Somebody said it was almost four o'clock. Once or twice he got a gentle push to move out of the way; but he stood dumfounded as the truth flashed upon him.

The letter, the address of which he had never no-



ticed, was burned, and the loss began to assume a very serious aspect. He dug his hands into his trousers' pocket, hoping that he might be mistaken, and find the letter there, but there was only a crumpled sheet of paper, which had lain in his pocket since the day Nannie had passed it to him in his aunt's house on Mount Vernon Street.

Jack started to walk about the wrecked cars, keeping his eyes on a faint streak of light in the eastern sky.

In the meantime messages had been sent over the wires, and the people were hopeful of getting another train before a great while.

Jack gave a helping hand whenever he could, and when the sun rose with the promise of a beautiful day, the straggling groups of people brightened perceptibly, and looked over the wreck with renewed interest, now that daylight made everything visible.

For the next few hours everybody worked, and at last the tracks were cleared, and the longed-for train steamed into view. They were only seven miles from San Francisco. As the train sped onward to its destination, Jack faced a problem that he had not dreamt of a few hours earlier. What was he going to do when he reached the city? That was the one question



that filled his thoughts to the exclusion of every other.

To arrive in a strange city without a cent, not even knowing the name or address of the person he was supposed to visit, was a very different prospect from what he had pictured. He bitterly regretted his carelessness in not having read the address on the letter, and thought with sorrow of the roll of bills that had been burned, and which might have been saved if he had only placed them in his trousers pocket.

His watch, too, a gift from his father, was gone, and altogether it was a very sad loss for Jack Tenfield.

He was still musing on his unfortunate plight when his journey ended, where, in the midst of hurry and bustle, the boy stepped from the ferry-boat—a stranger in a strange city.



## CHAPTER XV

### AT WORK

JACK walked briskly, not knowing in the least where he was going, and thinking rapidly all the while of his future plans.

His first thought was to send a telegram to Mr. Ford De Wolf, and acquaint him with his loss; but it suddenly occurred to his mind that the man was not in Boston, and would not be there for a whole month.

He had told Jack that he was going on a hunting trip, with some friends, who had a camp in the wilds of Canada.

At a corner of a street, Jack stood for a minute and searched his pockets, where he was lucky enough to find a dime and a nickel.

The nickel was soon invested in a large yellow banana, which Jack knew would have to be his breakfast, dinner, and supper for that day. His next thought was to visit the water front and find out all the news he could about the *Suzanne*.



He inquired of a policeman the direction to take, and was soon on his way to the wharves. When he finally reached them, he was doomed to disappointment, as there was not the slightest clew to the whereabouts of the *Suzanne*.

Jack Tenfield sat on the steps of a large warehouse on the water's edge, and wondered what he ought to do next.

In spite of the change of fortune, the loss of money and letter, there was a certain feeling of triumph to be there in San Francisco, where sooner or later the *Suzanne* would come into port, and with her Burge Tebbett.

"I'm here, and I'm going to stay here," said the boy, suddenly making up his mind to look for work. Then he remembered that he had no coat, but that would not matter for a time in hot weather. "I'll stay until I see Burge." With this thought uppermost in his mind he arose and walked rapidly away from the water front.

He watched the large buildings and stores that he passed, with eager eyes, debating in his mind the subject of going into some of them and asking for employment.

Suddenly he came to a small park, where a few



people were loitering, and his eye fell upon a newspaper on an empty bench.

Jack hurried to the seat, picked up the paper, dated that morning, and began to read the "want advertisements."

He selected three from among the "Male Help Wanted," and started in at once to locate the places.

The first advertisement was a position for an errand boy in a broker's office, but, after much walking, Jack found the place already filled, and in the second he had no better success.

He was feeling tired and hungry, when he took up the paper and read once more the third advertisement for a boy.

"Wanted—A bright, honest boy for general office work. Wages, three dollars, with chance of promotion. The Pitman & Barnes Mfg. Co."

After walking about a mile, Jack found himself before a large building filled with mowing machines, and all other kinds of agricultural implements.

He entered and was shown into a private office, where he found two boys ahead of him, waiting for an interview with the manager. Our hero had no sooner taken his place among them than the door of a private office was opened by a large swarthy man, with



keen black eyes, who took a quick survey of the lads, and without a word seated himself at a roll-top desk.

He brought out three slips of paper and three pencils, which he distributed among the three aspirants for the position.

"Boys," said the man, eyeing each lad in turn, "I want you to add the short column of figures that you will find on the slip of paper. When you have done so, write your name and bring the paper to me. You may begin at once."

Jack never raised his eyes till his column was added up and down twice over, his name written as well as he could possibly write it, and he was standing at the man's desk.

"Is it right?" asked the manager in a low voice.

"Yes, sir," said Jack simply.

The man waved him to his seat, and began to talk in subdued tones to the next boy. He also was motioned to a seat, and the third boy questioned.

In a short time the man arose and, addressing Jack, said: "You may go into the front office and report to Mr. Goodspeed. He will put you to work at once."

"Thank you," said Jack, starting to obey, while the other two lads left the office with a grin.

Jack was conducted to a desk, where he was soon



busily employed indexing a large invoice book. Several other tasks were assigned to him during the course of the day, all of which he performed as well as he could. Doing one's very best, at all times, was one of Jack's mottoes.

He was still working away when some one pushed his elbow, causing an awkward mark on an otherwise perfect page.

Jack resented the movement, and turned quickly to see who had been the cause of it.

He found a young man at his elbow, about eighteen or twenty years old, who scowled at him, and said: "Say, git out er here. Are you goin' ter work all night?"

A quick retort was on Jack's lips, but before he uttered it, another man appeared on the scene, and the surly youth turned on his heel and disappeared.

"Have you any objection to working a few hours this evening?" said the newcomer in a very pleasant voice to Jack, who promptly replied that he had not.

"This is our busy season," said the man, "and for a few weeks we find it necessary to stay evenings in order to keep up the work. Later on, in the dull season, the time is made up in many ways;" and so saying



he passed Jack a half-dollar, telling him to go out and get his supper, returning in half an hour.

The boy started at once, delighted at his good fortune, and counting up in his mind all he could save if he worked every evening and got fifty cents for his supper.

He went into a near-by restaurant, and bought a glass of milk and two large buttered rolls for ten cents.

With forty cents in his pocket besides his dime, he hurried back to the office of the Pitman & Barnes Mfg. Co., and worked away at his desk till a sudden quiet caused him to raise his eyes, when he found himself alone.

"'Bout time to put the lights out, sonny," said the watchman, coming into the office.

"I didn't notice that everybody had gone," said Jack with a smile.

"You're a new one, aren't you?" asked the man.

"Yes, sir," replied Jack, "I only came to-day. What time do you open in the morning?"

"Well, this is our busy time, you know," said the man, "and it is just a rush and bustle all the time. We open pretty early now. Seven sure, and some of 'em get around here at half-past six."



"That *is* early," remarked the boy.

"Yes," said the other, "but we pay up for it a little later; you won't have to be here till eight and after."

"I suppose you sleep here," said Jack, making up his mind to stay all night if he could.

The man nodded, whereupon Jack asked him if he could sleep there for that night.

"Sleep here!" exclaimed the watchman, "haven't you got a home?"

Jack told the watchman a part of his experiences since the accident to the train, and offered to do the sweeping and chores in the morning if he might be allowed to stay.

"That's a queer yarn you're telling me," said the man, "but you look honest, and I'll let you do it for this once."



## CHAPTER XVI

### CONCERNS NANNIE

WE will leave Jack Tenfield for a very short time, because just at this point in his career Nannie begins a new life.

“But this is a boy’s story,” you may say, “therefore what is the good of having a chapter on a girl?”

There are a few reasons why I want to tell you a little about Jack’s sister. In the first place, there may be girls who would read this story, and want to know something about Nannie. In the second place, she certainly played a part in Jack’s career. He was very fond of his sister and, as you will see before the close of the book, proud of her as well.

Isabelle Tenfield was married in early October, and started at once for England, which was to be her future home.

Two days after Isabelle’s departure Nannie was on her way to the Misses Fitts’ select school for girls, in a neighboring suburb.

There were conflicting emotions in Nannie’s heart,



as she looked out of the coach windows at the great, gray house with its numerous windows that was going to be her future home. In her hand was a sealed letter which Aunt Cordelia had written with the instruction that she was to give it to the lady principal immediately after her arrival.

In answer to Nannie's timid ring, a clever-looking woman opened the door, and conducted her to a small parlor, where a thin, spectacled lady in black was writing at a table.

"You are Miss Annette Tenfield, I presume," said the lady, rising and extending her hand to the girl.

"Yes, ma'am. If you are the lady principal, here is a letter from my aunt."

Miss Augusta Fitts smiled kindly over her spectacles as she took the letter; and Nan's little heart grew lighter, and the great house did not seem so lonely; such is the power of a kindly smile.

Nannie never knew what was in that letter, but she saw the smile fade from the woman's face, which gradually assumed a very stern expression.

In answer to a bell a young woman showed Nannie to her room, where she removed her things, and then went below to a great hall. Shortly after she entered,



a bell sounded, the doors opened, and a bevy of girls came bounding into the hall for recess.

Nannie sat on a long settee near a window, watching the chattering throng, when somebody touched her on the shoulder. Nannie turned, and met at her side a short girl about her own age, holding an immense pickle, half-hidden in a handkerchief, toward her.

"Take a bite," said the girl, exposing a little more of the delicacy.

"Thanks," said Nan rather shyly, "I don't think I care for any, thank you."

"Don't you like pickles?" asked the other in the most surprised tones imaginable.

"Yes, sometimes," stammered Nan, blushing furiously, as a group of girls a short distance away stood looking at her.

"Well, never mind," remarked the girl with the pickle. "You don't get a chance at a pickle very often. This one was smuggled in to me. My name is Theresa Surrent, what's yours?"

"Nannie—I mean Annette Tenfield."

"Oh, never mind the Annette; they all call me Tessie, and I'll call you Nannie, if you like."

The girl continued to enjoy her pickle, plying Nan



with questions all the while. "Can you make good fudge? Here's a secret: there's going to be a lark in my room some night next week, and I'll invite you, but don't breathe it to that red-headed girl at the piano, because she'll tell. Her name is Marie Deshon. Are you hungry?"

"No, thanks," replied Nannie, who could not shake off a certain diffidence, in spite of Tessie's volubility.

"Well, I am, and it's 'most dinner time; horrid dinner on Monday—just soup and things warmed over from Sunday and old boiled rice that's tasteless as sawdust, but Tuesday——Oh-o-o!"

Tessie smacked her lips, and continued for the next five minutes to acquaint Nannie with the bill of fare for the whole week, both as regards quality and quantity.

Nannie, who longed to ask her companion a great many questions about the school, the studies, and the games, suddenly asked a characteristic question, "What do you do here besides eat?"

"Oh, a few things," returned Tessie, and immediately chatted on about home-made candy, and an old woman who lived near the school and made "perfectly exquisite taffy," and sold it to the girls.

It was evident that Tessie had no interest in any-



thing that did not appeal to her stomach, and Nannie sat quietly beside her, and listened till a gong sounded that ended the recess.

In a few days Nannie felt quite at home in her new quarters, and liked it on the whole. It seemed so good not to have Aunt Cordelia nagging at her that she grew quite like the sunny, fun-loving Nannie of old.

The "subduedness," though still present, was not "smothering," as she had described to Jack. The girl began to be more interested in her studies than in former days. At the end of a week Nannie had vowed eternal friendship for Tessie, and for several others, had learned how to make "good fudge," and taken the leading part in an escapade that almost cost her dismissal, and incidentally taught her a good lesson.

One day a note was slipped into her hand in the classroom, which read as follows:

"When all the lights are out to-night, come to my room. Slip a piece of white paper under the door, so that we may be sure it is you. "T. S."

Nannie went about the rest of the day full of suppressed excitement, knowing that the note meant the "lark" that Tessie had hinted about for days.



That night when everybody was supposed to be in bed, Nan arose and groped her way noiselessly along a dark corridor till she came to Tessie's door, when she suddenly remembered that she had forgotten the paper to slip under, which was to be the signal for her admittance.

Nannie did not like the idea of going all the way back for a little piece of paper, at the same time she was afraid to make any noise.

At last she gained courage enough to turn the door knob gently, hoping that Tessie would understand, but there was not the slightest sound from within. After waiting a second Nan gave a gentle knock, then another and another, still there was no response.

At last she tried a short cough, and looked around in the dark, fearful at the sound of her own voice. It was useless, however, as no sound could be heard in Tessie's room, and the dark corridor was beginning to look grewsome to the shivering girl at the door.

Disappointed, she started back for the paper. How terribly dark it was! Nan began to feel more frightened at every step. All at once she thought she saw something moving in front of her a few feet ahead. Nannie's teeth chattered, and her steps faltered.

At last she could not touch the wall that had been



her guide. In her excitement she had lost her bearings. She looked behind, and it seemed as if the black thing was very near her. Nannie took another step and the next minute was lying on her face and hands at the end of a short flight of stairs.

She screamed in affright, doors were opened, lights appeared, and surprised faces were before her in a very short time. Nannie was more frightened than hurt, although it was a very fortunate thing that she had fallen the short distance, instead of the long flight of stairs that was very near.

The next day there was a private interview with Miss Aurora Fitts, which Nannie never forgot. She would not tell why she left her bed to wander in the dark corridor, for fear of implicating Tessie and the other girls. A "tattle-tale" was a most despicable thing in Nan's eyes. Neither would she tell the slightest untruth, and the result was that she refused an answer to some of Miss Aurora's many questions.

At first she was threatened with dismissal from the school, but this was afterwards changed to probation. "Your aunt, Miss Tenfield, in her letter to my sister, warned us that you were a very troublesome, difficult girl. We had hoped that the discipline of our school would change that in a very short time, but we were



mistaken, and I am afraid we will have to send you back to your aunt."

This was too much for Nannie, who burst into a flood of tears, whereupon Miss Aurora relented and gave Nannie "one more chance."

It is needless to say that Nannie was very grateful, and showed by her behavior that she was going to do her best.

There was a very wholesome atmosphere about the school, and Nannie learned, among other things, that the Misses Fitts possessed under a stern exterior, very generous, tender natures; that it would be hard, indeed, to find two more lovable, refined women in the broad land.

What the girl never could forget, however, was the statement of Tessie, when all the excitement was over. "You poor thing," whispered Tessie, "I had changed my mind that night about the 'lark,' and forgot to tell you."



## CHAPTER XVII

### JACK LOSES HIS TEMPER AND SOMETHING ELSE

WE left Jack happy in the fact that he was working his way, earning and saving money, and looking forward to the arrival of the *Suzanne*, and Burge.

In a short time he knew the routine of the work as perfectly as he knew a framed motto that hung over the door of the private office, and read in large letters:

“The best is none too good, and always the cheapest.”

Large shipments of goods were sold every day by the Pitman & Barnes Mfg. Co., and with each purchase that left the premises an invoice was sent. As the invoice clerk was obliged to make them out very rapidly it was part of Jack's work to look over every invoice to see if it was figured and addressed correctly, the manager being very particular that no mistake should occur. When Jack had gone through a batch of invoices, he placed them in a large book, whose pages were blank tissue paper, between wet blotters



and oiled sheets, then pressed by means of a small hand press, and a perfect impression made of every invoice that left the office.

This work was all new and interesting to the boy, who thoroughly enjoyed it. He addressed all the envelopes and sent off the invoices. In his spare moments he indexed books and made himself generally useful.

In the meantime he had secured a small side room in a boarding house, and spent his leisure time—he had very little—visiting the water front and incidentally seeing a new city. During his hour for dinner he never missed a day that he did not hurry to the wharves to inquire for the *Suzanne*.

There was only one drawback to Jack's good situation with the Pitman & Barnes Mfg. Co., and that was occasioned by the meanness of one who worked in the same office with Jack.

Timothy McVeigh, or "Tim," as he was called, had shown a resentment to our hero ever since the first day of his coming. It was McVeigh who scowled at the boy, and pushed his elbow on that first evening, and ever after showed his dislike in many ways.

At first Jack did not know why he had incurred this enmity, but learned afterward that one of the boys



who had applied for the position was a friend of McVeigh's, and that this young man had been very much disappointed because his friend did not get the place.

Jack Tenfield did not notice many petty, mean, little acts that McVeigh meant for his eyes alone. After a while, however, they became almost unbearable, and the boy's manly spirit resented them, to such an extent that he was on the point of having a quarrel with McVeigh on several occasions. But Jack Tenfield's position meant everything to him, situated as he was, and he was fearful of losing it; therefore he bore much from the older boy in silence.

He had been the victim of several mean practical jokes planned by McVeigh, which he had quietly ignored, until one day the boy's pent-up thoughts and feelings burst into action. It was noon-time and Jack, starting out for dinner, reached for his hat in a closet, where the men hung their clothes. The hat was gone, and hanging in its place was an old, brimless straw hat that looked as if it had been picked out of an ash-barrel.

Jack's face reddened with anger. He was in a hurry to get to the wharves, and chafed at any delay in his short hour. "Your hat's in Room 11," whis-



pered Levi Stone, a small errand boy, who was standing near.

Jack knew that there was such a room, where some of the young men congregated in the noon hour, but he had never been in it. He ran quickly up the stairs, opened the door of Room 11, and walked into a party of young men sitting around on boxes, making an admiring group, with McVeigh for a center, who was pouring beer from a large pitcher, and passing it around.

Jack spied his hat on a barrel, and took possession of it at once.

"Here, yer half-starved Yankee, take a drink," drawled McVeigh, holding a cup of beer toward the boy. Without a word, Jack Tenfield knocked the cup out of McVeigh's hand, and it crashed to the floor, spilling its contents. McVeigh, with an oath, made a rush toward Jack, but our hero gave him a smashing blow on the cheek that sent him staggering backward.

By this time every man was on his feet. "You dare to call me a half-starved Yankee! You big coward!" roared Jack, making a run at his tormentor, who had renewed the attack.

"Here! here! this won't do!" said a big, broad-



shouldered shipper, stepping between the boys. "You've got to take some one your size, McVeigh; you're four or five years older than this lad."

"No such thing!" cried McVeigh, "he's eighteen if he's a day."

"That's a lie," cried Jack, and again he struck out with a fury that held the spectators spellbound for an instant, then they held him, and McVeigh was led off with a bloody nose.

Jack could not eat any lunch that day.

He walked slowly toward the wharves, sorry that he had lost his temper, and still full of indignation at the other boy's action.

That afternoon, when he was bending over his desk hard at work, he was called to the manager's private office. The man of few words scanned Jack from head to foot, when the boy stood before him.

"We don't have rowdies in our employ," said the man in scathing tones. "Go to the cashier, get what money is due you, and leave this office at once."

Jack did not speak, but his lip quivered at the manager's words. After all, he was only a boy, and if he had opened his lips to say one word, the mortifying tears would surely have appeared.

Jack felt that he could not speak to any one at that



moment, and without a word he got his hat and rushed out of the place. When halfway up the street he heard some one calling his name, and turned to see Levi Stone waving a small envelope.

"It's your money," said Levi, "the cashier sent me after you."

Jack took the envelope, and continued on his way.

"McVeigh got the sack, too!" shouted Levi, but Jack never heard him as he hurried along, not knowing where, but longing to be alone.

After a walk, he turned into the street that contained his lodging house. He entered his cheerless room, and sat on the bed, his bright, boyish face clouded with disappointment. But Jack Tenfield was not given to brooding over misfortunes. Time was too precious to waste in that way. In a very short time his active mind was planning to seek other employment.

Before doing this, however, he decided to write Mr. Ford De Wolf a long letter, and tell him all that had happened.



## CHAPTER XVIII

### JACK TAKES A NEW POSITION

THE following morning Jack Tenfield was up very early, anxious to look for employment as soon as possible. He asked a man in the lodging house about the different newspapers, and having learned which was the best for "want advertisements," bought a copy and proceeded to read them.

There were only two advertisements for boys; one in a dry-goods house, the other in a hay and grain store.

Jack chose the latter and presented himself in due season as an applicant, but the very first question was about his references from the Pitman & Barnes Mfg. Co. Of course, Jack did not have any, and when the man in the grain store questioned him about his dismissal, Jack told the truth and was in turn politely told that he would not suit.

With many misgivings in his mind Jack walked rapidly to the other end of the city to the dry-goods house, but he was again disappointed. The man in the office informed our hero that he would not con-



sider him for one moment without a reference from his last place.

All the rest of the day Jack trudged over the city, looking for work, and returned to his cheerless room at night weary and disappointed.

The next three days were spent in a similar round of disappointments, and Jack's little sum that he had saved while in the Pitman & Barnes Mfg. Co., began to dwindle very perceptibly. He wondered again and again why he did not hear from Mr. Ford De Wolf, and one evening when everything seemed very gloomy he wrote another letter, asking Mr. Ford's advice.

On the morning of the fifth day he started out and after a walk turned his footsteps toward the wharves. A fine penetrating mist began to fall that became a steady downpour of rain. Jack turned up his collar and walked briskly. He had almost reached his accustomed place of inquiry for the *Suzanne*, when he noticed a covered wagon, on the side of which was printed in large letters:

BOSTON CRACKERS\*

AND

SHIP'S BREAD

The word "Boston" had a fascination for Jack, and his eyes were riveted upon it for a full minute.



While he was still gazing, the cart suddenly stopped and the driver called out, "Say, sonny, do you want a job?"

"Yes, sir," replied the boy promptly.

"All right, step right up here," said the man, making room for Jack beside him. "My boy had an accident this morning," he went on, "nothing serious, but he'll be laid up for a spell." At this point they turned into one of the wharves at the end of which was a huge ship. The man directed Jack about certain matters, and the boy was soon busy carrying biscuit from the wagon down into the steward's quarters on the ship. He had to get on his hands and knees and crawl into the narrow part of the fore-castle where the cuddies were in which the biscuit or "hardtack" was packed.

This biscuit is a little larger than a common soda biscuit, but twice as thick, dark brown in color, and hard as a stone. It is always dipped in some liquid before using, to make it palatable.

"You do first-rate for a green hand," said the driver when they were in the wagon, and on the way to another wharf. "I reckon I've seen you 'round here before."

"Yes, sir, I think you must have seen me, if you



have been around here much. I come every day. I'm on the lookout for a friend of mine that is on the *Suzanne*."

"The *Suzanne*—big four-master—Captain Herford?" said the man slowly.

"Yes, sir; do you know her?" asked the lad, all interest.

"Certain," said the other; "she's due here 'most any time, now; hold on, and I'll find out when she was heard from last," he added, and to Jack's surprise jumped down from the wagon and disappeared behind the door of an office on one of the wharves.

Jack's heart gave a bound when the man came out a few minutes later, saying that the *Suzanne* was reported by a steamer about two months ago.

"How did you find out?" asked Jack, greatly interested.

"Why, that's the office of the shipping news; the list of every one of 'em is in there."

The boy smiled to himself as he realized how much easier it would have been for him to have made his inquiries there also, instead of walking all over the docks, and asking questions here and there of strangers.

In the course of a few weeks Jack felt very much



at home down at the wharves, and on the numerous ships that his employer supplied with bread. He liked his new work, and hated to think of the time that the other boy would return to take his place again. He met a great many strange sailors from different parts of the world, and saw various curios and pet animals that had been picked up in foreign parts.

On one occasion he had an experience that he did not soon forget. He was loading a French ship from India one morning, that had a cargo of spices, and had just made his way into the ship's hold with the bread, when all at once a hatch was closed over him, making him a prisoner. Jack picked up a mallet, used for caulking the decks, and pounded on the hatch with all his might. He made a great noise, and in a few seconds steps were heard, and he was let out by a grinning Spanish sailor.

"Look here!" cried the boy, "that's a pretty serious thing to joke about—anybody would suffocate in there in a very short time."

The sailor mumbled something in Spanish, and pointed to a monkey a short distance away, that Jack had not noticed before.

"Yours?" queried Jack, making signs that the sailor would understand.



"*No me gusta*," was the answer, which meant, "I don't like," while Jack walked over to the little fellow, who sat there blinking his shrewd eyes.

"So," said Jack, "you locked me in that hole, did you?" He had hardly said the words, when the monkey made a spring, caught Jack's cap, and scampered off with it as fast as he could go. He climbed up the rigging like a flash till he got very near the top of the mainmast, and there he sat, turning his head from side to side, dangling the cap, now in his hands and again grasping it with both feet, and swinging with one hand from the dizzy height.

Jack watched the antics of the monkey till his neck ached, and he began to grow anxious to get his cap.

Suddenly the monkey started to descend, but when almost down he took a jump and reached the tip end of the main yard. Jack began to whistle softly, and held a biscuit to coax him. All at once the mischievous little fellow dropped the cap into the water, and presented himself before Jack for his reward.

Our hero did not like to lose his only cap, but it was gone, and there was no use in crying over spilt milk.

A good-hearted Frenchman, who had witnessed the



performance, gave Jack an old black felt hat to wear home that our hero accepted with thanks.

“That’s a queer-looking thing they gave yer to wear,” said the driver with a smile, when Jack had related his adventure with the monkey.

“It looks as if it had seen some pretty rough weather.”

“Oh, well,” laughed Jack, “I shall buy a new cap to-night.”

He little knew what was in store for him when he made this remark.



## CHAPTER XIX

### A NEW CAP, AND WHAT FOLLOWED

JACK usually took a walk in the evening. He liked to watch the crowds, the strange faces about him, and look into the windows of the stores.

The evening that he started out to buy a cap, he chose a section that he knew very little about. The location had been suggested by his German landlady, as a good place to buy any kind of wearing apparel.

"Plenty shops and cheap," she had remarked as a final recommendation.

The boy soon discovered that the street she had in mind contained a number of small stores, kept by Hebrews, who did a thriving business at night. Into one of these small stores walked our hero, bought a new cap, and departed.

After walking a short distance he turned into a dark street, which he recognized as one not very far from the docks.

It was near a lamp-post that Jack noticed a tall man almost at his elbow, who accosted him pleasantly.



"Hello! sonny, taking a walk?" said the man, turning a rough, weather-beaten countenance toward the boy.

"Yes, sir; I walk around here a great deal," replied Jack, pleased to have some one to talk with on the dark street.

"You like to look at the big ships down there, I bet," drawled the stranger. "Do you live near by?"

"Oh, no, sir!" said Jack with a smile, "my home is in Boston. When I came here a few months ago, I didn't know a soul."

"You don't say," returned the other, "well, you're a pretty smart chap, and away on here from Boston! But I was jest like yer. I ran away when I was your age, too, an' I had a great time, I tell yer."

"I didn't run away, sir," said the boy quickly. "I came out here with a letter to a friend of a Mr. De Wolf, but the car was burned, and I lost the letter and all my money. You see I had not read the address on the letter, so I had to shift for myself. I'm expecting a letter any day from Mr. De Wolf, telling me just what to do."

"You're the lad!" cried the man, giving Jack an admiring pat on the shoulder, "I bet you've struck luck, too."



"I've got work, I'm thankful to say," said Jack, "but it's only for a while. I'm waiting for my chum. He's on a ship due here any time, now. Perhaps I'll join him, and go to Alaska with Captain Herford."

"You don't say!" exclaimed the smiling stranger. "Well, I'm in that business myself, so I'm some interested. What ship might it be you're waiting for?"

"The *Suzanne*, Captain Herford——"

"Not the *Suzanne*, Captain Herford, bound for Alaska?" interrupted the stranger glibly.

"Yes, sir; do you know anything about her?" was the eager question.

"Know the *Suzanne*! well, I should say I knew my own ship—why, she's in port; got in 'bout an hour ago."

"Is Burge there? Burge Tebbett boarded her at Horn Point."

"Burge? a lively young chap like yourself? Of course he is; an' now I think of it, you're the very one he's been telling me about for the last fortnight."

Jack's heart bounded at the news, and he was ready with a string of questions, when the man said, "Why! you can see Burge to-night, sonny, if you've a mind to. I'm going up the street here a bit, to a boarding-house, where we all stop when we're in—he's comin'



to supper right away, and if you want to see him, come along with me. Of course, if you're in a hurry or got anything else to do, you could wait till to-morrow, an' I'll tell him."

"Wait till to-morrow," thought Jack, when there was a chance to see Burge that night. He could hardly conceal his joy and impatience as he answered, "Thank you, sir, I'll go with you now. I'd like very much to see him."

"Come right along, then, sonny; Burge 'll be right pleased to see you, I can bet on that."

Oh, the tumult of joy that surged in the boy's heart, as he walked beside the stranger. What a streak of luck, thought the lad, to have met him, and what a splendid surprise he would give Burge!

"Let's see; he told me your name, but I've clean forgot it," said the man suddenly.

"Jack Tenfield."

"Of course; why, I've heard that name 'bout enough times to know it, but my memory's awful poor for names, anyhow. Now, do you know," he went on, "I always call him 'Bert,' but his name is Burge, 'cause he told me so one day. Here we are," said the stranger, stopping at a queer-looking old house with a black door, "bet he's up there now."



He took a key from his pocket and let Jack precede him into a dingy-looking hall. There was a horrible smell of rum and tobacco about it that surprised Jack Tenfield. He could not help thinking that it was a strange place for Burge Tebbett to come to for his supper, but he did not have much time to dwell upon this matter, as he was following his new friend up a flight of worn stairs and into a room.

"Make yourself right at home, Jack," said the man. "I'm goin' to order something; p'r'aps you'll join me."

"Thank you," replied the lad, "I've had my supper."

"Nonsense," said the man, pushing a chair from a table toward Jack, and seating himself opposite, "have a doughnut an' a cup of tea. I'll be telling you 'bout some of our doings on the *Suzanne*."

He left the room for a minute, and Jack glanced around at the ill-smelling room in which he was sitting. It was even more dingy and bare-looking than the hall below. The room was empty, save for an old lounge in one corner, full of humps and hollows, and the bare table with its two chairs. The bare walls were cracked and tobacco-stained, and taken altogether, the dining room in which Burge Tebbett was



awaited by his friend, Jack, was the dirtiest one that a clean, wholesome lad ever graced with his presence.

"Burge isn't here yet," said the man, coming into the room, and taking his place at the table, "but he'll be here any minute, so we'll go right ahead and eat supper." He placed a doughnut and a cup of tea before Jack, and two bottles before himself.

"Now, don't tell me that you can't eat that doughnut—you've got to. You're a growin' boy, and I wouldn't give a cent for one that didn't have an appetite. Why! when I was your age, I used to smuggle doughnuts into bed at night, an' sometimes fall asleep with half-a-one between my teeth—fact! sure's you're alive."

The glib stranger began to mix rum for himself from the two bottles, and after he had swallowed a couple of glasses he offered one to Jack, saying, "It's the best rum yer ever sniffed at."

"No, sir," said the boy, surprised and shocked. "I wouldn't drink it."

"Never hurt yer; make yer feel full 'er spunk, an' sassy, that's all."

Jack made no reply, but he took a mouthful of tea from the dirty-looking cup, swallowing it with an effort; and was in no hurry to take a second cup.



"Go ahead, son, drink yer tea. Burge 'll be here 'most any time," said the man, helping himself to a fresh supply of the liquor.

Jack watched the door, longing for the moment to come that would bring Burge Tebbett.

Our hero could not drink the nauseating tea, and it was anything but pleasant to sit opposite a man who was drinking rum. The boy had lost his good opinion of the man, even though he had been a fellow-sailor with Burge.

Every decent, manly boy must scorn a drunkard, and Jack Tenfield had more than the average contempt for one.

Jack's father had been a strong temperance advocate, and had early implanted in his boy's mind his own views on the subject of alcohol. Many a tale of woe, told by his father, after a round of visits to some of his poor patients, had fostered the boy's dislike and horror of liquor. He had heard his father say, on more than one occasion, that nine-tenths of all the poverty and misery in the city was caused by rum.

There was a fine old man, who sometimes was a guest at his father's table, and Jack had heard him say, "Oh, for an army of preachers, a strong, upright army, that would go the length and breadth of the



land, fighting this terrible enemy—*rum*.” Jack thought of all these things.

Here was a man before him not only drinking it, but had offered the same to a mere boy. What kind of a man could he be?

Another saying of his father’s suddenly flashed into Jack Tenfield’s mind. “Never trust a drunkard. The rum that steals away his senses, robs him of honor.”

Should he have trusted this man? The question made Jack start suddenly, and look around him. After all, what proof was there that Burge would come to the place. Jack glanced at his companion, who was eyeing him with a sinister expression on his bold, dissipated face.

An undefinable fear of something began to steal over the boy. He took another sup of the tea, to appear self-possessed, knowing that the man opposite was watching him closely.

Suddenly the door opened, and a man thrust his head into the room. He glanced knowingly at Jack’s companion, then with a grin disappeared, shutting the door with a bang.

Jack Tenfield’s heart began to beat like a trip-hammer. Was he in some kind of a trap? His active



mind began to ask a hundred questions, which, alas! he could not answer to himself. His head felt queer, and he could not bear to meet the sinister face of the man opposite. His eyes wandered past the man, and he began to take note of the room again.

"Go ahead! sonny, drink yer tea," urged the man, breaking a silence that had become fearful to the boy.

"No, sir," said Jack, pushing it away from him, "I don't care for any more."

In a second the man was on his feet. He drew a knife from inside his shirt, and raised it threateningly over the terrified boy. "Drink that tea, damn yer, an' drink it quick."

Jack's trembling hand raised the cup to his lips, and he drained its contents.



## CHAPTER XX

### AN UNEXPECTED MEETING

WHEN the stranger whom Jack had met on the dark street, told him that the *Suzanne* had just come into port, he did not know that he was stating a fact.

That same night three members of its crew, Burge Tebbett, a man named Vickery, and another called Smithy, were walking rapidly away from the wharves to have a "land" supper in an up-town restaurant.

Burge towered above his companions, and although but a lad of seventeen there was a length of limb and a breadth of shoulder to him that might have belonged to a man of twenty-five.

As they hurried along they saw just ahead, at the corner of a short street, directly under a lamp-post, two men approaching, half carrying some one between them. Burge's companions paid little attention to the trio, supposing an intoxicated companion was being helped along.

The boy eyed them with natural curiosity as they passed, especially the helpless one, who was to all ap-



pearances, a tramp with an old slouch hat pulled over his eyes.

"They were going through his pockets under that lamp-post," said Smithy, "I saw them throw something away, didn't you?" At this instant Burge stooped and picked up a piece of white paper at his feet.

"Perhaps it was this," said Burge, smiling. "Let's see what it is." He opened it, and beheld quite a lengthy "poem," which was headed

"LINES TO JACK."

"A sentimental tramp," laughed Burge, while his smiling companions craned their necks to read the lines.

"Here's a joke, boys. If this isn't a regular love letter all in rhyme."

"'Dear Jack, this house is sad and drear,'" read Smithy, shaking with mirth.

"Oh, I say, it's rather mean if he lost it," said Vickery, whose name was Jack, and who had a sweetheart waiting for him in Portsmouth. "I'd like to give it back to the poor chump."

"Oh, I guess he'll survive its loss," returned Smithy in dry tones.



"It might teach him to let rum alone next time," added Burge, starting to crumple up the paper.

As he did, his eye fell upon a name at the end of the verses, that held his gaze, as if fascinated.

"Nannie Tenfield."

For a full minute Burge read that name as if he could not believe the evidence of his senses; then he thrust the paper into his pocket.

"I must see those men," cried Burge, leaving his surprised companions, and darting down the street like a flash. At first he could not see a trace of them, but suddenly he caught a glimpse of three people quite a distance ahead, and ran faster than ever.

Near a high board fence he caught up with the two men, half carrying their companion, and said quickly: "Pardon me, but where did you find that man?" pointing to the supposed tramp.

"Find 'im?" growled the fellow, turning to Burge with an angry frown. "W'y, where do you s'pose we found 'im? Stiff on the sidewalk, if yer want ter know."

"Do you know who he is, or anything about him?" asked Burge eagerly.

The man answered with an oath and demanded what business it was of Burge's, at the same time



hurrying his burden along. Burge Tebbett followed at their heels, more puzzled at every step, and wondering what it could mean. How could such disreputable men know anything about Jack Tenfield. Perhaps the tramp didn't drop the paper at all, thought the boy, and was on the point of turning away when another lamp-post was reached, and the angry man turned and asked Burge what right he had to follow them.

Burge did not answer, as he was contemplating the wisdom of going about his business, when all at once he got a stinging blow in the eye that sent him reeling backward. Half blind with pain, Burge recovered himself and sprang at the now thoroughly aroused villain.

The other man, after watching his companion for a second, laid the man he was supporting in the street, and started in to help him.

Burge shouted for help with all his might, defending himself as best he could. In a second he was answered by his comrades, Vickery and Smithy, who had walked leisurely after him, and ran at once to his assistance.

At the approach of Burge's friends, the two men ran off as quickly as they could, leaving their limp



burden, still unconscious, almost at the feet of Burge Tebbett.

"Well," said Vickery, turning to the boy, "this is rather queer business for you, Burge."

"Let's have a look at *him*," said Smithy, bending over the inert form, while Burge leaned against the fence in silence, holding one hand to his painful eye.

"Looks harmless enough for all the trouble he's caused," said the sailor, pushing back the slouch hat. "Why! it's a boy!"

Burge Tebbett darted forward and knelt beside the prostrate lad, whose pale face and clear-cut features were now plainly discernible. "It's Jack—it's Jack," cried the boy, and staggered to his feet.

When Jack Tenfield opened his eyes he found himself quite alone, in bed in a ship's cabin. There was no need to ask himself how he got there. Every detail of his encounter with the stranger stood out vividly before his mind. But thinking was an effort for the first time in Jack's life. His head ached so badly that it seemed at times as if he could not stand the pain. After a while he closed his eyes, and dozed off into a troubled sleep, in which he lived all over again the terrible moment in the room, when the man drew the knife. In the dream, however, he tried to escape by



getting under the table, only to be dragged out by the dark-browed villain who had opened the door and looked in upon them.

A wild scene followed, in which Jack jumped over chairs and tables, and reached a door that he opened and then ran down a long, dark passageway. How long it was! He ran on and on, but it seemed to have no end, and all the while following close at his heels was the man with the shining knife.

Oh! the horror of that race, and the interminable length of the dark passageway. And now the man was gaining on him. Jack could almost feel his hot breath, and the knife, held aloft, sharp and shining! He could almost feel it in his back. He tried so hard, so desperately hard, to run faster, but he could not, and now the man was right on his heels, and the knife! Jack gave a shriek, and opened his eyes.

He saw a bright, boyish face at his bedside, smiling down at him. He shut his eyes again. It was part of the dream, he supposed, and he did not want to wake up and find that face gone. Then some one laid a cool hand on his hot head, and he opened his eyes once more.

"Jack, don't you know me?"

"Is it really you, Burge?"



"It isn't anybody else that I know of," said the lad with a smile.

"Where am I, Burge?"

"In the best cabin, aboard the *Suzanne*, three hours out from San Francisco, bound for Seattle."

The pain in Jack's head made him wince as he whispered, "Where is he?"

"Whom do you mean? Captain Herford?"

"No," said the sick boy, drawing a hand across his forehead. "I mean the man that you were always talking with about me,—who had the knife, and made me drink the tea."

"Hush-sh! you mustn't talk any more. When you're all better, you can tell me about it—not another word now," said Burge, raising a warning finger. "Try to go to sleep," he added. "I'll be in again."



## CHAPTER XXI

### GOOD-BYE TO THE "SUZANNE"!

JACK TENFIELD was a very sick boy during the remaining part of the trip of the *Suzanne* to Seattle. It was only a few hours before they reached the city that he felt really well.

He had told the whole story to Burge, and had thanked fortune that he had been rescued in the nick of time, and had not been "Shanghaied."

"Shanghaied!" What a volume of meaning was in the word. What a story of horror it conveyed to the lad's mind!

"Just think, Burge," said Jack one day, when he was well on the road to recovery, "I might have been aboard some ship, bound for China or some other distant port, by this time. It must be a terrible thing to be carried off like that."

"Yes," said the older boy, "I can't think of anything more terrible. I heard Captain Tebbett tell, one time, about a lad that was carried off. He was



beaten and half-starved, and worked to death by one of those rascals."

"Well, Burge, only for you, I'm pretty sure that would have been my fate. A man that would offer liquor to a boy to drink, would be capable of almost anything that was bad and vicious, so I have you to thank for escaping that horror."

"Not me," laughed Burge, "it was Nannie's poem. You thank her when you write, and tell her to send some more poetry."

"That was funny!" exclaimed Jack, "I remember now, that afternoon I went to Aunt Cordelia's big house in the city, poor little Nannie told me how lonesome she was, and all that sort of thing. She said that she had written a poem to me about it, and just had time to slip me the paper, when my aunt appeared. I stuffed it in my trousers pocket, and never thought of it again. If it had been in my jacket it would have got burned with the other things. By the way, have you the poem?"

"Yes," was the short answer.

Jack was a little surprised when Burge added, "If you'd like to read it, I'll get it, but if you don't mind, Jack, I'd like to keep that poem."

"Oh, certainly," said Jack, "I don't want to read



it now—any time will do. I've read bushels of Nan's poetry."

At this point Burge had to hurry away, as the *Suzanne* was getting ready to unload her miscellaneous cargo, and he had work to do.

Jack walked about the deck, and gazed at the busy scenes around him, until some one called his name, and he went below.

"The Captain wants to see you a moment, Jack, in there," said Burge, pointing to a companionway.

The boy hurriedly entered, and was greeted by a hearty hand-shake from the master of the ship. "So you didn't get to Davy Jones's locker after all, my boy," laughed the Captain, "but by all 'counts you came mighty close to it."

"Yes, sir," said Jack, "I thought myself I'd never get over it all. I'm very much obliged to you, Captain," he added.

"Not at all, not at all, my boy. Now, what I want to say is this: Burge has told me your whole story, and I'm in doubts whether I ought to take you along on this Alaskan trip, or whether it would be better to ship you safe to Boston."

Jack Tenfield's heart sank at this statement, but his spirits rose when the Captain said:



"As far as I'm concerned, I'd like to take you along with us first rate. You're a bit shaky yet, which is not to be wondered at, when you remember that pi-zened tea and all that followed, but when you're in trim there's a cut about the jib I like, an' I guess I'll take yer. We won't be gone ferever. I'll explain it all to Captain Tebbett, and he can tell your folks."

The Captain was called at this point, before Jack could thank him, but our hero hurried away to find Burge and tell him the good news.

Later in the morning Jack went aboard the dredger with Burge, and met some of the men who were interested in the venture of obtaining gold by this means.

Among them was a young man, named Crawshaw, who had quite a long talk with the boys, and explained the course they were about to take.

"You are from Boston," he said suddenly, during the conversation, turning to Jack.

"Yes, sir," replied the lad, "how did you know?"

"By your accent," said the young man with a smile. "It is unmistakable, and when you are older, and have traveled more, you will be able to tell, after a short talk, just where certain people come from."



"Well, sir," returned Jack, with a smile on his boyish face, "I think you must have come from Boston, also."

"You are right," said the man, "I lived there all my life till I came West. I used to go to the Boys' Latin School."

"That name is familiar to Jack," ventured Burge, "he goes there."

The young man looked at Jack with renewed interest, and asked him some questions about the school. This led to the young man's telling the boys a part of his own experience. "I came out here to Marysville two years after I was through school, expecting to find a 'wild and woolly' town, but was agreeably surprised to see a well laid out city. I started a little paper, 'The Marysville Leader,' and some time later published another, 'The Snohomish Times.'

"At first everything prospered, and I was doing very well, but later on reverses came, so I sold out one day, and started for Silverton—that really was a little 'wild and woolly.'"

"What kind of a place was it?" asked Jack, greatly interested in the young man's story.

"Silverton?" said Mr. Crawshaw. "Well, picture



to yourself a town in a narrow valley, on a swift-running river, and surrounded on all sides by high mountains, many of them snow-capped.

"It was about forty miles from the Sound, and at an altitude of nearly two thousand feet. Many of the mines are that much higher. The town was built of log and shake—split cedar boards—houses and tents, and when I went there it was rapidly developing into a live mining camp.

"It was what is called 'a low-grade camp,' that is to say, the ores are 'rebellious,' and require long treatment to separate the precious metals from the base metals, which accompany them. The ore bodies are large, and the outlook was excellent. I started a paper there called 'The Granite Falls Miner.' I also did some prospecting myself, and had a couple of men out in the hills. One day I had an offer from a friend in New York to go to Alaska on this dredge, so I sold out and here I am."

The boys were very much interested in all that the young man had told them, especially Jack, who deep down in his heart had literary ambitions, and the thought of running a newspaper himself some day had been a boyish dream ever since he was a very small urchin.



"Washington is a pretty big place," said Burge, "when one stops to think of it."

"Big—you're right there, my boy," said the man. "Why, there are a great many people who haven't any idea of the size of some of our Western States. I heard a man say, one day in Marysville," the young man continued, "that he had come from 'way back in the East. Imagine my surprise when I found out that he meant North Dakota."



## CHAPTER XXII

### GOING NORTH

WHEN the *Suzanne* had disposed of her cargo, she found herself in charge of a new master. Captain Herford and his crew got aboard the big dredger, and one fine morning the engines were set in motion, and they sailed out of the harbor, heading for the north.

For a while there was very little excitement for our boys, who made themselves generally useful doing a little of everything, from washing dishes to working around the engines.

One morning the dredger was directed towards a small bay or inlet, which narrowed to a creek at the foot of a mountain, down the side of which could be seen a stream winding its way to the sea, and which our prospectors hoped would prove to be gold-bearing in the sand washed down with it and deposited on the bottom of the creek.

In a short time a suitable place was selected and at a word of command the dredger was anchored by its four large posts or "spuds," one at each corner of



the deck, driven into the bed of the creek by machinery.

When all was ready, word was sent to the engine room, and very soon the machinery was at work, stirring up the mud and gravel on the river bottom. This was pumped upon deck into long troughs, and then over a device furnished with compartments filled with mercury, which attracted the gold in the mud, and which were cleaned every now and then to see the results.

Day after day Jack watched the process, and was surprised to see what a very small amount of gold was obtained after all this labor.

Captain Herford was disappointed, but kept busily working, hoping to strike a rich "find."

Sometimes at night, when the day's work was over, all hands sat around on the broad deck and strange tales of land and sea were exchanged between the shipmates.

It was on one of these nights, with a sea of stars in the sky, and the great mountains looming up from the shore, that Jack and Burge sat side by side and heard Captain Herford tell a weird story.

"It's nigh onto forty years ago, but it's all as clear as if it happened yesterday."



With this preliminary, the Captain began his tale.

“There was a certain rocky island off the coast of South America, which sailors declared had treasure enough buried on her to float a king’s navy.

“Not a seafaring man that rounded the Cape in those early days but had heard and believed the tale.

“It was supposed to be the spoils of pirates. Be that as it may, the treasure was there, so everybody claimed, and one day a company was formed in London to begin the search, and I happened to be a sailor on the ship, the *Tirzah*, Captain Luce, that was to carry them to the island of the hidden millions.

“The party was under a youngish chap, named Griggs, and they carried all the necessaries to go ahead and dig.

“We had a good passage and reached there in the early summer.

“It seems like the other day, everything is so plain, that Griggs came on deck early one morning while I was cleaning up a bit. He had as fine a head and shoulders as ever I see on a man, and he says to me with a smile:

“‘I have a fancy to go over to the island before breakfast. What do you say?’



" 'All right, sir,' says I, and I lowered the boat and we pushed off.

" When we got well in Griggs jumped ashore.

" 'You wait here,' says he, 'and if I want you I'll whistle.'

" You see we had only anchored the night before, and I knew that Griggs was jest wild to take a look around himself.

" My eye followed him for a short while as he went inland a bit, but it was so rocky that pretty soon I lost sight of him altogether, and I just drifted about while waiting.

" At last the minutes began to drag, and not a sight or sound of Griggs, and as I had to hurry back, I thought I'd step ashore and tell him.

" I tied the boat and waded ashore, and hadn't more than turned a sudden rocky point, when I came right plump upon him—stretched out for dead.

" Dead I thought he was for a minute, but I felt his heart and knew he was alive. I took a quick look around me, but there wa'n't a human in sight, then I glanced at Griggs, when to my horror I noticed that his right thumb had been cut off and was nowhere in sight.

" I lost no time then, but hurried back to the boat



and gave the alarm. Pretty soon I had help and we got Griggs aboard the *Tirzah*.

“The poor fellow did not come to for hours; when he did—but, pshaw! what’s the good of goin’ over all those ravings again—fact is, he was clean out of his head.

“Well, boys, we found a mystery on our hands, biggest kind of a one it was, but later in the day Captain Luce, with about every man on board, and all well armed, went ashore.

“We went over that island, but there was not the slightest sign of life anywhere, so we gave it up and returned to the *Tirzah* more puzzled than ever.

“The next day a fellow named Blowitz, who had been with the captain and had scoured every part of the island, made up his mind to go over alone—he wouldn’t even let me row him over.

“When he didn’t come back for dinner we went after him, and found him exactly in the same place we got Griggs.

“His right thumb was missing and his mind had gone with it. Blowitz never recovered. He died, poor fellow, on the way home, and was buried at sea.

“Well, sir, after we found Blowitz, that settled it. The men who came to dig for the treasure all the way



from London did not seem in any hurry to begin work.

“ They had a holy horror of the place, and some of them said openly they wanted to get away. One and all refused to begin work.

“ The captain was puzzled, but he thought if he'd wait a little while the men would get over their superstitious dread of the place, and in the meantime he'd be on the lookout to try and solve the mystery.

“ Well, sir, that island began to have a fearful fascination for me. I rowed clean around it every day, while the *Tirzah* lay anchored there and looked in vain for a sign of life.

“ At first I didn't dare go ashore, although each day I felt a little bolder. I tried hard to get some of the others interested, but they all declared there was a horned devil on it, who cut off your thumb and left you mad just for sport.

“ By this time Griggs began to mend, and though he talked strangely enough at times, there were days that he was quite rational.

“ Two of the men attempted to ask him about the thumb business, but he flew into such a violent rage that they shut up and never tried it again.

“ But I was bound I'd find out something from



Griggs, and used to bring his meals to him on purpose. One night when he had drank some soup that I had brought to him he seemed more like the Griggs that used to be, and I started in to have a talk.

"I spoke about the weather and the ship, and everything I could think of except the one thing that I wanted most to talk about.

"You see, I had seen what Griggs was before he went ashore that mornin', and what a different kind of a man he 'peared to be after, an' I was a bit backward about mentionin' it. However, it was Griggs himself who opened the way.

"'It was you, Herford,' says he, 'that rowed me over there, wasn't it?'

"'Yes, sir,' said I, 'and all I regret is that I didn't go ashore with you.'

"Griggs laughed, and a most diabolical sound it was, and he says: 'Sorry that you weren't mutilated, hey?'

"'If there'd been two of us, perhaps it might not have happened,'" I remarked.

"'When are we going to get out of this cursed place?' said Griggs, ignoring my remark.

"I didn't answer him at once. I was burnin' with curiosity to ask him a few questions, but rememberin'



the story of the other two, I asked nothin', but I said:

" 'Well, Griggs, I'm goin' over to that island tomorrow mornin' alone, same as you did, and take my chances.'

" His face turned white and he clutched my hand.

" 'Don't, Herford,' says he, 'don't you do it.'

" 'I'm determined to go,' says I; 'of course if you'd tell a feller what he might expect he'd know better how to defend himself, in case anything turned up—but speak it or keep it, I'm going.'

" Griggs was silent for nearly five minutes, an' I was just beginning to get uneasy, when he spoke.

" 'Well, Herford,' says he, 'if anybody told me the facts that I'm goin' to state, I'd say they were crazy—that's all—you can believe what you please—but I hadn't walked twenty steps that mornin' I left you when I saw comin' toward me the most hideous monster that the mind of man could imagine.

" 'Whether it was beast or devil, I didn't wait to see. I turned to run, when, to my horror, there was another not a yard away, and it seemed as if fifty of them peered at me from behind the rocks.'

" 'He threw something over my head like a sheet. That is all I remember. You know the rest, and the



proof of it I shall carry with me through life.' He shuddered as he held up his mutilated hand.

"It was a grewsome tale, but it didn't kill the desire I had in me to go on that island.

"I laid in my bunk that night, and I went over Griggs' story fifty times in my mind.

"No beast, thought I, was throwin' a sheet over a man's head, and no devil but a human one was a cuttin' off thumbs.

"I had a certain theory of my own about the whole business, and early the next mornin' I started to row over to the island, landin' at the same spot, near as I could figure, that I had taken Griggs.

"I held one hand carelessly in my blouse, but it was holding tight, you bet, to a thirty-two caliber. I turned in from the rocky shore, and hadn't taken twenty steps, when, sure enough, out of the ground, it seemed, comin' towards me was the thing.

"It had horns, and looked half man and half beast; but, as you can see, I had no time to examine details.

"Instead of turnin' suddenly to run away as Griggs had—I knew there'd be the other one—I took a right-hand course and ran like mad for a few yards, and then turned suddenly, my revolver cocked. There



was the other, sure enough, comin' toward me, but he dropped like lead when my bullet struck his heart.

"When I turned my smokin' pistol for the other, there wasn't a trace of him.

"My first impulse was to give chase, but I didn't know just how many of these queer monsters there might be, and as discretion is the better part, you know, I took a hurried survey of the thing I had shot, and found just such an arrangement as I had figgered out.

"One of the horns had been knocked out of position in the fall, and showed as clever a piece of make-up as ever I saw.

"The man's face had been painted black, and he wore a suit covered with hair, that gave him the appearance of a huge ourang-outang.

"I didn't wait to look him over very closely, as I was anxious to get back to the ship and tell my story. So I hurried off, and Captain Luce and almost everybody aboard came back with me to see my curiosity; but we were disappointed. The body had been removed while I had gone, and we couldn't see a trace of it.

"Some of the men, at my urgent request, made a hurried search. Every part of the island was ex-



plored, and I was givin' up in despair, when my eye fell upon a small piece of white cloth on the edge of a jagged rock. I started towards it and discovered the entrance to a small cave.

"It was empty, but near the openin' was a small pile of human thumbs.

"We also found several holes in different parts of the island, which showed that the men had been diggin' for the treasure.

"The island was not far from the mainland, and we decided that they must have got ashore. That's the whole story, though I might add that we never found the least sign of the great treasure."



## CHAPTER XXIII

### JACK'S FIRST BEAR-HUNT

ONE morning the "spuds" were hoisted, and the big dredger slowly steered her course farther north.

They were now in Southern Alaska, and as the fruits of their labors thus far had proved anything but satisfactory, Captain Herford had hopes of better luck in the more northern waters.

They sailed to the mouths of creeks and inlets, and for weeks worked hard to obtain the gold that they knew was in the soil.

By far the most interesting part of the journey to the boys now was the hunting and fishing.

They caught more salmon than anything else in the way of fish, and the entire party had grown so tired of this dish, served up in all sorts of ways by Sambo, a big, good-natured negro, that one morning Captain Herford and some of the men started out to see if they couldn't get something else for a change.

Our boys were in the party, each armed with a



rifle. When they got ashore and went into the woods, they hoped to find plenty of game.

Jack and Burge had kept together, and were so intent in looking about for signs of life that they lost the main party, and found themselves near a stream.

They had not gone far when, all at once, Jack caught Burge by the arm, and stood perfectly still, watching a novel sight.

On a slight projection about two hundred yards ahead was an immense bear, getting his dinner in the following manner.

He stood so still that it seemed to the boys that a great statue was posed before them, not the slightest motion could be seen in his huge body, as he looked into the water of the stream. Suddenly the boys saw him plunge his immense paw downward and bring up a fat salmon, which he devoured in the shortest possible time. Again and again he brought forth a squirming fish, while the boys stole cautiously toward him, their hearts beating faster at every step.

Suddenly they stood. Jack was tingling to shoot, but never before had he attempted to shoot anything that had life, and he was conscious of a peculiar sensation.

"Let us both take aim and fire together," whispered



Burge, and suiting the action to the words, the boys discharged their rifles; but they had aimed poorly. Jack's bullet had gone wide of the mark, while that of Burge had struck the bear's ear.

He turned with a grunt of rage. Burge in his excitement stumbled over a stump of a tree, at the same time crying:

"Quick, Jack, fire!"

Jack was trembling with excitement as he took aim again. And true aim it was, for in less than a second after he fired the big brute rolled over in a heap. Burge was on his feet by this time, and fired again and again.

The boys ran to the fallen animal, and gazed on the result of their first bear hunt.

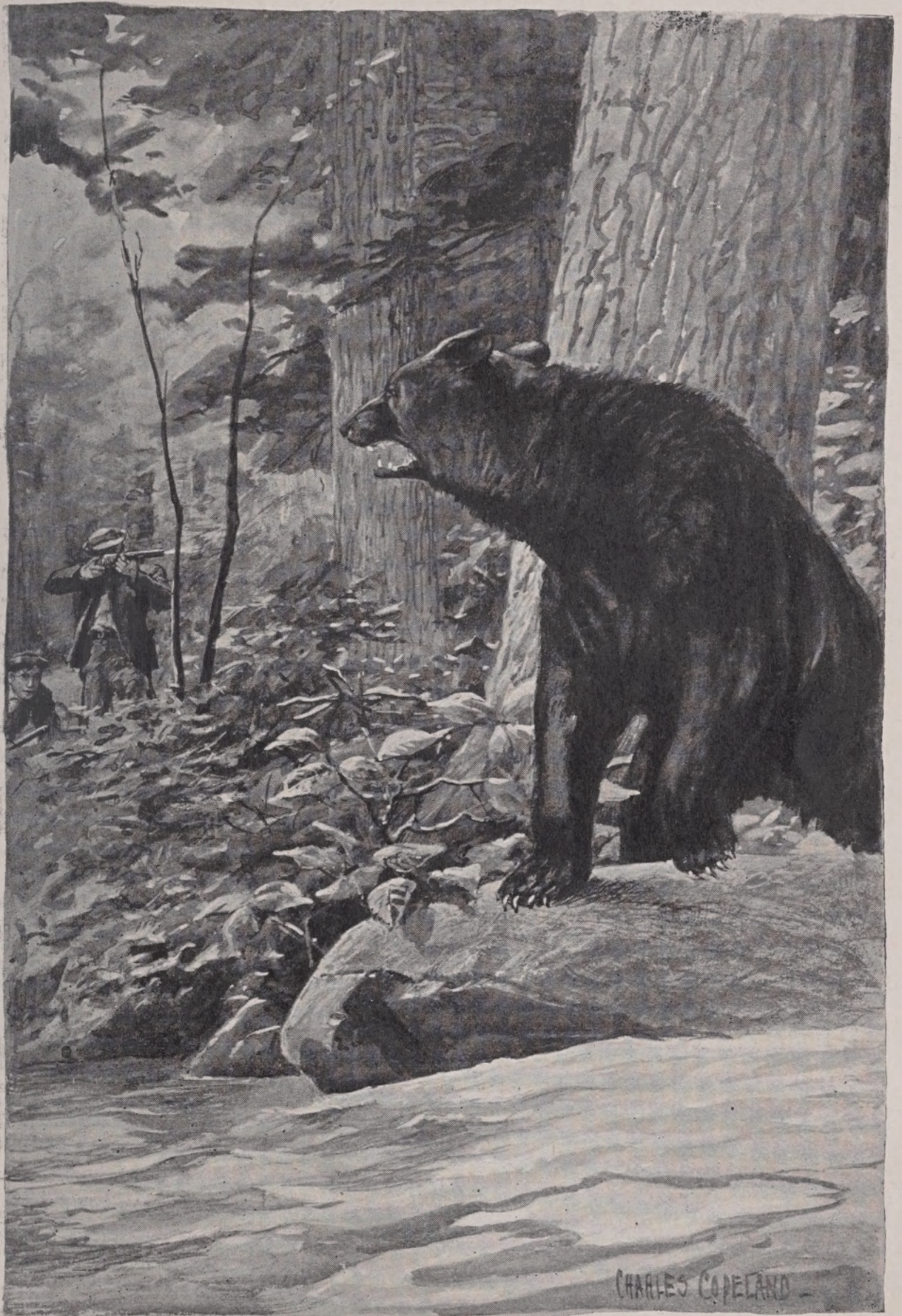
"I wish the others were here," cried Jack, elated beyond measure at the success, and full of boyish pride to show what he had done.

Burge gave a prolonged whistle, then another and another, which was finally answered.

"That's Captain Herford's whistle," said Burge, "they can't be far away."

He was right. The Captain's party suddenly appeared to report their poor luck, but shouted with glee when they saw what the boys had brought down.





JACK WAS TREMBLING WITH EXCITEMENT AS HE TOOK AIM  
AGAIN. — *Page 218.*







"He's a beauty," said Captain Herford, "and will furnish us with steak for quite a little time."

The bear was carted home, and Sambo showed all his teeth at the prospect of cooking something new.

"You kin go an' git up an appetite, fo' yo'll git de best bear steak yo' ever imagined fo' yo' dinner."

"That's good, Sambo! that's the way to talk. Let's see you do your best," said Captain Herford. At the same time turning to the boys, he said:

"How would you like to look around a bit this morning? You've had such good luck with your guns, perhaps you'd like to try it again."

The boys were very much pleased at this suggestion and, after a few directions from the guide, who cautioned them not to go a great way from the stream, they started off. Following the advice given them, the boys tramped on for nearly a mile in a forest of pines. This brought them to a slight elevation, studded with spruce trees. They stood for a second and looked around them, but no sign of life was visible. They started to climb a small hill to get a better view, and had taken but a few steps when Jack almost stumbled over the skeleton of a man. Both lads gave a start, and stood gazing at the grewsome sight for several seconds.



"Well," said Burge, "this is a queer find, isn't it?"

"I'd like to know who the poor fellow was, and how it all happened," mused Jack.

"Perhaps he was a trapper," ventured Burge, "he might have died from exposure. I wouldn't like to be alone in this wilderness very long."

"Let's look around. There might be something that would give a clue," said Jack, looking on the ground at his feet, and behind a clump of bushes. He had hardly uttered the words when his eye lit upon an old leather pocket-book, as ragged and weather-beaten as if it had lain there for twenty years, and perhaps it had.

Jack opened the book, while Burge stood beside him and scanned its contents. The first few pages were filled with drawings and sketches of maps, and figures that the boys did not, of course, understand.

On the last page, however, dated seven years before, they made out the following:

"It is now twelve days since I left Camp Everett. Have lost my way in a terrible storm.

"AMIDON SEERS."

"He was probably a prospector," murmured Jack, "and it was a hard fate."



The boys talked about it for some time, and decided to return at once and report the matter to Captain Herford. Accordingly they retraced their steps, and soon found themselves within sight of the dredger. As they neared the creek they heard a bell clang the fact that dinner was ready.

Captain Herford liked promptness, and so the boys hurried along, and decided not to tell him until the meal was over.

It was a hungry set of travelers who sat down to dinner that day, and when Sambo placed a steaming pot of soup in the center of the table, there was a murmur of satisfaction on all sides.

"Changed my mind de las' minute 'bout dis dinner," said Sambo, serving the soup with a broad grin on his shining face.

"Changed your mind, did yer?" said the mate. "You're always doing that same thing, Sambo. You pretty nearly changed it not to come to Alaska, but you did. Makes me think o' Warney Hobbs," he said, turning to Captain Herford. "It's a true story, too!"

By this time the men were ready for the meat, and a welcome change from the well-known salmon was expected, but all at once there was a storm of protest,



as an odor of broiled salmon reached the hungry men, and Sambo was called for lustily.

"Here, you Sambo," cried Captain Herford, "we are just about sick of salmon, and wanted some bear steak. What do you mean, anyway, by serving up that same old dish?"

"Same ol' dish?" repeated Sambo, his black eyes rolling over the men in surprise—his whole attitude one big interrogation. "Fo' de Lord, Cap'n, dat's bear steak I'm a-cookin' for youse. I done cooked no salmon dis yer day."

The men looked at each other, as if they could not believe it, while Sambo began to serve the meat.

"Sambo is right," said the mate, "this bear has been living on salmon so long that the flesh is permeated with the taste—he *is* salmon, that's all."

"That's rather strange," said Captain Herford, "but I guess you're right. And now," said the Captain, who liked a good yarn at dinner, "let's hear that story about Warney Hobbs."



## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE MATE'S STORY

“WELL, Captain, it happened in my own town, an’ I can vouch for it, an’ it happened like this:

“‘All my life,’ said Warney, ‘there’s been something a-peckin’ at me to go to New York. When I was fifteen the hankerin’ fust took me; it kind er wore off at twenty, but came back strong at twenty-five.

“‘At thirty I’d jest abaout decided ter make my will an’ start, when father died, and that changed my plans.

“‘Now,’ said Warney, ‘I’m turned fifty-four, an’ I’m a-goin’, blow me, even if it does cost like tarnal.”

“‘Yer better not,’ says Mrs. Warney—we allus called her that, ’cause there were four other Mrs. Hobbses ter onct in Woodville—‘don’t you do any sech foolish thing, Warney,’ said she, ‘you’re a young man yet, an’ I don’t want to be a widder.’

“‘If you go to New York, you’ll come back deaf,’



says Stephen Holt. 'No one, 'less they're born to it, can stand the noise.'

" 'They'll know yer a man o' means, an' they'll jest charge you double fer everything,' said one neighbor.

" 'They'll swindle yer farm outer yer, see if they don't, Warney,' said another.

"For a month and more Warney listened to all these warnings, but he was determined to go, and for another month he went around taking advice.

" 'I advise agin yer goin', Warney,' said old man Bailey, 'but if you're determined, then go, but look out if any of those slick roosters come around with a gold brick ter sell yer. Jest show 'em your money—let 'm know you hev the cash, but 'fore you do any business you tell 'em to prove it's a gold brick, see? Make 'em prove it's genewine, then yer all right—might close a bargain, an' come out ahead; an' remember I warned yer.'

"Warney was the hero of the town. His name was in everybody's mouth, and he began to feel what it was to be a person of importance. It was a secret delight to Warney to stalk into the village store and see a crowd of his fellow townsmen suddenly become mute, and look up at him with interest. Warney knew they had been discussin' his proposed trip, but



he tried not to feel puffed up, and looked modestly unconscious.

“ Well, it got to be the third month, and Warney started around to say good-bye. Every day, a'most, he'd harness up the ol' mare, and off he'd start ter visit some one in the next kaounty.

“ ‘ Better begin a leetle away from home,’ said Warney, ‘ and when that's all done 't'won't take so long in my own town. I guess I can do it all in a week 'round home.’

“ Now, it happened that there was just one man in Woodville who didn't offer any advice or warnings, or urge against Warney taking the trip, and that man was his next neighbor, Henry Boyce. On the contrary, whenever Hen met Warney he said it would be a great trip, and he wished he could take it himself.

“ Now, Hen and Warney had been rivals when they was twenty-one for Sally White, and Warney had won out, an' although they'd allus been good friends, Hen and Warney, there was a leetle feelin' there, some folks said, but Henry Boyce was very well off—had the best farm in the kaounty, an' was a very successful man.

“ Well, Warney was jest a leetle oneasy 'cause Hen urged him to go. He got so worried about it that he



put himself in Hen's way scores o' times; then he would mention casually the dangers an' losses attendant on such a journey, ter see if Hen wouldn't give in just a leetle like other folks, but no, sir, Henry stuck to it, and urged Warney to take that trip for all he was worth.

"Well, sir, Warney used ter lay awake nights, an' think o' ways and means to make Henry Boyce admit it was a risky thing to do, but he failed every time.

"At last it got to the 'good-byes' in his own town, and after that there was nothing else to be done. So one Monday morning the ol' mare was harnessed up, and Warney drives himself to the depot, his valise alongside o' him.

"He wouldn't let any of the folks go with him; it was a notion he'd got into his head. He said he'd tie the mare near the depot, and Billy, that was his boy, could go after her.

"His duster coat was flying in the breeze, as he druv along, an' all the folks waved to him, and shouted a word or two, as he went by.

"Warney looked for Henry Boyce, but there warn't a glimpse of him, and Warney's feelings, which, one might say had been conflictin' since he awoke at five o'clock, began to steady themselves into one big long-



ing. As he went along he more than half wished that 'stead of driving to the train to take him to New York, he was dozing comfortably on his back porch.

"But he stifled the longing best he could, and jogged along. He couldn't go back now, and that thought roused a little stubborn doubt. What he resented more than anything was the fact that Henry Boyce had urged him to take the trip.

" 'Consarn him!' muttered Warney, 'why don't *he* go. If it's sech a big thing to go to N' York why don't he take the trip himself, 'stead o' urgin' me?'

" 'There's something back of it,' said Warney, his suspicions rising to b'iling point. 'Mebbe he thinks it will be the last o' me, and he's got his eye on the farm.'

"Now, Henry Boyce had a buxom wife and ten children, and Mrs. Warney was the boss o' seven, and her farm was free an' clear, so it isn't jest plain how Warney reasoned. However, the nearer he drove to the depot, the farther away he was from New York, far as inclination went, and the first sound of the train sent a mighty queer feeling over Warney Hobbs.

"He looked at the approaching train, then he cast his eyes over the pleasant fields o' Woodville, same as



if it was his last look. He got down off the team, glanced at the ol' hoss, and took a few steps toward the train.

" ' Shall I go ? ' says Warney, half aloud.

" ' Neigh-h-h-h, neigh-h-h-h, neigh-h-h-h, ' says ol' Bess, with so much vim that Warney almost fell over.

" He turned his back on the train, steaming away at the station. The bell began to clang, and the train began to move, but Warney stood, as if unconscious of it all. It puffed away, and was soon out of sight, still Warney would not look.

" When everything was still but the song of a bird flying over his head, Warney stroked ol' Bess, and turned her face fer home. He stroked her once more, and looked all around. ' Talk about hoss sense, ' says Warney. ' Well, naow ! ' "

" Very good, " said Captain Herford, and for several minutes laughter and talk passed among the men.

" Well, boys, what luck did you have this morning ? " said the Captain, turning to Jack and his companion.

Jack thereupon told the story of their morning's journey, and the finding of the skeleton. He passed the old leather pocket-book over to the Captain, who



studied it silently for a few minutes, and put it in his pocket.

After dinner Captain Herford took a few of the men along and went with the boys to the spot where they had found all that was left of the unfortunate man who had perished there.

"Too bad! poor fellow," said the Captain, when they had reached the place, and he stood gazing for a minute at the whitened bones.

"Messmates," said the Captain, in solemn tones, "this is how we'll all look one day, though I pray the good Lord that our bones will not whiten in the wilderness. It would ill become a Christian to leave here all that is left of one who was made after the image and likeness of his Maker, so we'll do what little we can."

The skeleton was then placed in a sheet, and lowered into the grave that two of the men had made.



## CHAPTER XXV

### AN ADVENTURE IN THE WOODS

THE days were busy ones in camp life for Jack and Burge, in the way of hunting and fishing. They became quite expert with gun and rod, and had an adventure now and then to add zest to the sport.

One afternoon an Englishman named Mory returned from a short hunt with a large supply of wild birds and ducks, incidentally remarking that he had shot at a fox but only wounded him in the leg.

"I just hit him for sport," said Mory. "I had so much to carry that I let him go."

No one paid very much attention to this speech. Indeed! such speeches are as common in camp life as remarks about the weather.

Jack Tenfield, however, thought about it, and talked freely with Burge on the subject. A short time later both lads slipped away to follow the trail of the wounded fox. After a long hunt they found the unfortunate animal by the tracks of blood it had left,



crouched in a clump of bushes, dying the cruel, lingering death inflicted upon it by a superior being.

The fox tried to stand at the boys' approach, but fell again, weak from the loss of blood. One straight shot from Jack's rifle ended the sufferings of the poor creature.

The boys had been so intent upon finding the trail of the fox that they had lost sight of time and existence, and had been very careless about the road.

Imagine their surprise when they supposed they were half-way home, to find themselves in a strange path, utterly at a loss to know which way to turn for the right road.

"I believe we're lost," said Burge, at last, taking a look around him, "instead of being on the road for home, we've gone farther into the woods."

"Whistle," said Jack, "somebody may be around."

They whistled loud and long, and waited in vain for an answer.

"I'm afraid we've gone some distance in the woods," ventured Burge. At the same time the boys walked on, not knowing what else to do.

"I don't think we ought to go on," said Jack suddenly, "we may be getting farther off the road all the time."



"That's so," said Burge, "still there's a possibility that we may strike it, if we keep on; let's risk it any way."

The lads trudged steadily on, hoping to stumble upon the right road, or meet some mark by which to guide them but, to their disappointment, they seemed more uncertain at every step, and they felt that they were deep in the woods, which began to grow dark and gloomy in the late afternoon.

By and by the sky showed a crimson sunset, but still the boys kept on with tired feet, for the prospect of spending the night in the wilderness was not a pleasant one. When darkness was almost upon them they stopped, realizing the fact that they were hopelessly lost.

"It is foolish to go on," said Jack; "we're getting deeper into the woods all the time. I don't like the idea of staying here all night, but we'll have to do it, or at least till they send a scouring party out for us. We'd better stay right here," he went on.

"What are you going to do?" asked Burge.

"Make ourselves as comfortable as we can under the circumstances," said Jack, "and trust for a speedy delivery," he added with a grin.

"Before it gets any darker," said Burge, "we'd



better get a pile of wood together. The nights are cold, even if it is summer. It will keep us warm, and frighten off bears at the same time."

So saying, the boys began at once, and picked up armfuls of broken branches, logs were dragged into place, and dry leaves and twigs were piled on top of all. Burge had a small box of matches with him, thanks to a suggestion of Captain Herford, who had told him it was wise to carry some matches in camp-life, in case of an emergency.

When the wood was all piled up, the boys sat on a log and looked about them in the gathering darkness. The quiet of the woods became more deep and solemn with the approach of night. It seemed like a great temple with the dome of the blue sky for its roof, and the giant pines waiting and worshiping in silence. Not a sign of life, not a sound in the still air. Jack Tenfield and his companion felt this awful stillness, and a nameless fear that came with it. No word was spoken, but both lads were thinking of the same thing, as they sat before the logs: the prospector who had been lost in the Alaskan woods, the bleached skeleton in the newly made grave.

Suddenly, out of the darkness from afar off came a long, low cry.



"A wolf," whispered Jack, grasping his rifle.

Burge jumped to his feet, took out his tin box and struck a match. "I think it's about time to light our fire," he remarked, "there might be a pack of wolves behind that cry, and they might be hungry."

In a short time the dry twigs began to twist and crackle in the flames, which the boys watched silently, and a touch of warmth and security made itself felt.

As they sat before the burning pile, their thoughts turned to the men at the camp, and they expressed their opinions of what Captain Herford would do, when they did not return. The flames cast a glow on the tall pines, making weird pictures and shadows in the flickering light.

As Jack sat there, gazing at the flames and beyond them, he suddenly became aware of something in the darkness, and that a moving object was approaching.

For an instant he was spell-bound, then without taking his gaze from the cause of his alarm, he pushed Burge's foot, and the next instant was on his feet, grasping his rifle, as if expecting an attack.

"Put up your rifle, my boy," said a voice, "I mean no harm." The next instant a man stepped before them.



"Pardon me," said Jack, "I thought it was a wolf," he added with a smile, "the flames half-blinded me, and my imagination did the rest."

As Jack spoke, the stranger looked at him keenly. "This is a strange place for a boy like you; how came you here?"

Jack told the story of the wounded fox, to which the man listened silently, but he shook his head when the boy finished, and said soberly, "You did a foolish thing, boys, to go so far into the woods. If it were bad weather it might be a serious matter. A young man who knew this place almost as well as he knew the farm he left in Southern California, was lost here, and his body has never been found. For seven years I have searched for some trace of him in vain."

"Was his name Amidon Seers?" asked Jack quickly.

The man started, and looked at Jack in wonder, and then said in a puzzled way, "Yes, did you know him?"

Jack hereupon related the story of the skeleton, and the finding of the leathern pocket-book, which, he said, was in Captain Herford's possession.

"Thank God!" said the stranger, dropping on the



log beside the boys, his head bowed low. He sat there for several minutes, lost in thought.

When he raised his head he turned to Jack, saying, "In about three hours the moon comes up, and we'll start for your camp."

This was good news for the boys, who had thought that they would have to stay all night where they were.

Jack looked closely at the man, who had again lapsed into deep thought. His face was covered with a thick growth of beard. The stooped shoulders were massive, and the hands that were clasped idly between the knees were brown and toil-worn.

But in spite of these evidences of a life of hardship, there was a certain air of refinement in his voice and manner.

"The last time I saw him," he said suddenly, turning to Jack, "he was a lad like you, full of life and courage, filled with a desire to run away and see the world—— Poor Don," he muttered, and again gave himself up to his own sad reflections.

For a long time no word was spoken, the boys refraining from conversation in their sympathy with this man, who had learned the sad truth after seven years.



At last the stranger arose, saying, "I think we may start now." At the same time he smothered the fire that had burned very low, and looked carefully to see that not a spark of it was left.

As the three journeyed forward it grew lighter, and for a few hours the moon showed them the way. When it was dark again they rested. The man produced from a bundle a couple of blankets, and told the boys to lie down, which they were very glad to do. They slept soundly, nor did they start again until the first streaks of dawn appeared in the horizon.

They had not gone very far when the sound of voices reached their ears. In a few minutes they met the party from the dredger, headed by the camp guide and Captain Herford.

Explanations were forthcoming, after which they all went back to the camp, where the stranger was made welcome; and after a good breakfast, the boys felt but little the worse for their night's adventure in the woods.

Later in the day, Mory, the Englishman, said jokingly, "If I'd known you boys wanted that fox as bad as all that I'd have shot him dead the first time, and saved you the trouble of finding him."



"I wish you had," said Jack, "we didn't want the fox, except to put it out of misery."

"What do you mean?" asked Mory, somewhat amused, and wholly surprised by Jack's answer.

"Well, animals have feelings of thirst and hunger and pain, just the same as you and I, don't they?" asked Jim.

"Well, what of it?" queried Mory.

"When they are wounded, they suffer the same as you and I—only a great deal more, because they don't have help. When I hunt, I shoot to kill, if I can—that's sport," declared Jack warmly. "The other is butchery."

He went off whistling, and left Mory standing with a puzzled smile on his weather-beaten face.

"What are you smiling over, Mory?" asked Crawshaw, a moment later, coming up.

"That Jack," said Mory, "is an uncommon kind of kid, but he's going to make a man some day."

"Jack," said Crawshaw slowly, "is going to make his mark in the world."

"Maybe he will," said the other. "If he happens to be born under a lucky star, he's all right."

"Nonsense," said Crawshaw, "I don't believe there's any 'lucky star' business about it. Some-



body said, 'Man is his own star,' and I believe it. We make our own lives, Mory, and Jack Tenfield's 'star' is the lad himself. With plenty of grit, and common sense, and sticking at it, there's bound to be success."



## CHAPTER XXVI

### A CHANGE OF SCENE

ONCE again the "spuds" were hoisted, and the dredger started on her way farther north, but she had not gone very far when it was discovered that the machinery was out of order; part of it was so badly damaged that, after several unsuccessful attempts to mend it Captain Herford reluctantly decided that there was nothing to do but go back to Seattle for repairs.

The boys were sorry to leave the scene of their recent adventures, the excitement of camp life, and the hunting and fishing, but a change of scene is always welcome to the youthful mind, and they began to look forward to the trip with interest.

It was well known that Captain Herford had been disappointed in the results of the dredging. The party had obtained very little gold for their labors, and even if the machinery had not given out, there were a few men who wanted to give it all up and go home.



The journey southward was an uneventful one. Sometimes they went ashore in search of game, of which they found an abundance. Great flocks of birds come to the shores of Southern Alaska in the summer, and the boys enjoyed some splendid shooting.

The morning they arrived in Seattle was a memorable one for Jack. After breakfast Captain Herford had called the boys aside, and presented each one with a five dollar bill.

"You've earned it, boys," said he, "and a great deal more, but that's enough for the present; now, there isn't anything you can do aboard here to-day, so I'm going to give you the day off to go around and see the sights."

The boys were delighted and, anticipating a most interesting day together, they hurried away from the docks, and walked through the main street.

They stood here and there, and looked into a shop window, or at a group of people, some of them selling their wares. All was new to the boys, who had not been in a city for many weeks.

As they went on their way, they saw a crowd of people in front of a large store window. The boys hurried their steps, and were soon in the midst of it.



The door of the store opened, and there appeared the round, wrinkled face of Professor Markin, who was last seen at the regatta at Pullman.

Stepping upon a small platform, the professor proceeded to address the crowd, and Jack was glad to hear that he no longer spoke in hoarse whispers.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said the showman, "within these doors are some of the marvels of the age. Walk right in, ladies and gentlemen, and see the cow with the double udder, the one and only cow, the most marvelous freak of nature; the despair of P. T. Barnum, who offered a fortune, ladies and gentlemen, five thousand dollars a night for every night this wonderful freak would be exhibited.

"I would not accept—why?—because, ladies and gentlemen, it is the one and only cow with the double udder.

"Walk right in, ladies and gentlemen, and see the beautiful snake charmer of India, the marvelous, the mysterious. The daughter of a Rajah king—a princess in her own country."

The boys might have listened to the end of the professor's story, if just at this point, somebody had not laid a hand on Jack's shoulder.

The boy turned, and saw a tall man dressed in a



blue suit who said, "Your name is Jack Tenfield, is it not?"

"Yes, sir," said Jack, meeting the keen eyes of the stranger, who suddenly opened his coat, and showed inside the badge of an officer.

"Jack Tenfield, you are in my custody. You must come with me at once."

Our hero was dumb for an instant, and Burge was so thoroughly surprised that he could only stare at the man.

"Do I understand you to say that I'm arrested?" asked Jack.

"I have no time for explanation, now," said the man, "you had better come at once."

"I'll go, too," whispered Burge, when Jack started to edge his way out of the crowd. He walked beside the stranger, while Burge followed close at his heels, wondering what it all meant.

As the thought of being arrested flashed into Jack's mind, his cheeks burned with shame, and the disgrace of being taken into a police station hurt his pride very much. He forgot for a moment, so deep was his mortification, that he was innocent of wrong doing. Suddenly a wild desire to run away from the officer flashed into his mind.



Jack began to ask himself if the man really was what he called himself. Ever since his experience with the glib-tongued stranger in San Francisco, Jack had been wary of trusting to appearances. It was good to know that Burge was with him, and, after going over the affair, he decided that it would be cowardly to run away. He would face the charge, whatever it was, and prove his innocence. Jack wondered if the people they met on their way knew that he was arrested. He was glad to think that the man was not dressed like an ordinary policeman, and he wondered most of all what he had done against the law.

At last they reached a large hotel and, to Jack's surprise, the officer stopped and motioned the boys to follow him.

"Don't you leave me, Burge," whispered Jack, hastily stepping inside. They stepped into an elevator and reached the second landing, where they got off and walked to a room numbered "18."

The officer knocked and, without waiting, opened the door. At first Jack thought that there was no one in the room, but his eye soon fell upon a man, sitting with his back to the door, writing at a desk.

When the door was shut, the man stopped writing



for a moment and, without turning, said, "Well, what news to-day?"

The officer coughed slightly, and for the first time gave Jack a very pleasant smile. He did not answer, and the man at the desk turned to look at him. The next instant Jack Tenfield was clasping the warm, friendly hand of Mr. Ford De Wolf. "I'm very, very glad to see you, Jack," said the man, "and you, too, Burge."

"I congratulate you, sir," he said, turning to the detective. "I didn't think you would find him so soon."

He then bowed the officer out, and once more gave Jack and his companion a hearty handshake. "Well, well, Jack, I little thought when I saw you on the train at Pullman, that all this time would pass before we met again. Thank Heaven, you are safe and well. I've been terribly worried, Jack."

"Didn't you get my letters?" asked Jack. "I wrote you three of them."

"Yes, I got them, but not until months after you sent them. I must tell you how it all happened. When I left you at Pullman, I believe I told you that I was going on a hunting trip to the wilds of Canada, did I not?"



"Yes, sir; I remember it very well."

"I went, Jack, and caught something there that I didn't plan to catch, and that was typhoid fever. I had a very bad attack and, what was worse than all, a severe relapse.

"My brother kept all business matters, letters, etc., away from me, so that I was in utter ignorance in regard to your accident on the train.

"When I learned that you had lost the letter, I wired you at once, but, needless to say, I was not successful in locating your whereabouts. I was terribly anxious, and at last employed a detective to look you up. He made inquiries at the wharves, and learned about your working for the cracker man. From there you were lost sight of for a time. At last I joined him, and we learned that you were on the *Suzanne*, and later, had gone with the party on the dredger.

"A steamer passed you last week and learned of the disabled condition of the machinery and Captain Herford's intention to go to Seattle for repairs. I have been waiting ever since. Now, Jack, give an account of yourself."

Our hero began his story at the time of the train disaster, and told all that had happened to the present moment.



Mr. De Wolf looked very serious when the affair with the man in the strange house, the drugged tea, and all the rest of what occurred on the dreadful night was related.

"If that terrible thing had happened; if you had been taken off on one of those torture-ships, it would have been my fault," said the man, breaking in on Jack's narrative.

"I think, sir, it was all my own fault. I ought to have known better than to tell my private affairs to a stranger, and I was a great simpleton to go into a strange house with him; it taught me a lesson," added Jack thoughtfully, "that I'll never forget."

"Jack, you are nothing but a boy, how could you have known? But I, a man who knows the world, to have sent you off there alone—well, well," he murmured, "it has taught me a lesson, also. And now," said Mr. De Wolf, taking out his watch, "we'll have some dinner, and after that we'll see the sights."

The two hungry boys who had lived on camp fare so long greatly enjoyed the dinner that Mr. De Wolf ordered for them. When dinner was over they all repaired to the street, and walked along, the two lads



not knowing just what was on the programme for the afternoon.

"Jack," said Mr. De Wolf suddenly, looking at the boy's fine color, "I must say that your camp life agreed with you. I never saw you look so well. Burge, also," he added, turning to the boy, "what an oarsman you'd make with that length of arm.

"And here's just the place," he continued with a smile, pointing to a photographer's studio that they were approaching, "'Barnes & Evans, Artistic Photography.' I'd like to have you boys sit for a picture, just as you are; what do you say? Come inside," urged the man, "if they can attend to it at once we'll do it."

The boys smilingly entered, and were pleased to know that they would not have to wait very long. When all was ready they stood side by side and were "snapped." They did not want any proofs sent them, and were to call for the finished pictures in a couple of days.

Mr. De Wolf proposed a visit to one of the theaters, where a wonderfully clever magician was performing. When that was over it was time for supper, after which they all went down to the docks to



see Captain Herford, the boys eager to tell him about the splendid day they had enjoyed, while Mr. De Wolf said he would like to make arrangements with the Captain to have the boys stay with him for a few days.



## CHAPTER XXVII

### THINKING IT OVER

THAT evening Mr. Ford De Wolf and Captain Herford were closeted together for a private talk in the Captain's quarters for a long time. At least it seemed so to the boys, who were awaiting his presence, brimful of enthusiasm over the plan to spend a few days in his delightful company.

When they came on deck together, Captain Herford shook hands with the boys, and told them that he had washed his hands of them for the present.

"You've got a new captain to steer you around, boys, and I hope he'll give a good account of you, and if sech a thing *should* happen that you'd reach Boston 'fore me, jest give my regard to Sister Sarah and Captain Tebbett, an' tell him I'm not going to give up jest yet; that I'm still on the gold trail."

The boys laughed at the idea of going to Boston, as they said good-bye to Captain Herford, and started off. When they had taken a short walk, Mr. Ford advised going to bed early, and as they were all tired



enough after the day's outing, the boys were not sorry to return to the hotel to sleep.

The next day and the day after that were spent in a similar manner. Mr. Ford De Wolf was constantly planning something interesting, and the boys were so much taken up with everything that they never once thought of the dredger.

On the fourth day, after breakfast, Mr. De Wolf reminded the boys of their photographs, and a little later they all repaired to the studio, where they found the pictures awaiting them, and very good pictures they were.

"I haven't had a photograph since I was five years old," said Jack, "when Nan and I were taken together. I'd like to have her see this one," he added with a smile.

"Send her one," said Mr. De Wolf, "it's just the thing to do. Nannie doesn't know what a traveler her brother has become."

"I'll do it," cried the boy eagerly, "she'll be surprised, I know. I think she's at boarding school, but my aunt can send it to her."

Jack hurried back to the hotel and wrote Nan a short letter, inclosing the photograph of himself and Burge Tebbett. When the letter was mailed, Jack



Tenfield did not give the matter another thought. Such a little thing slipped out of his mind altogether.

But it is the little things that count, and sometimes they bring tremendous results. Jack Tenfield and his companion little dreamt of what would follow the sending of the photograph.

The boys attended a baseball game in the afternoon, and that was about all the excitement for the day. A heavy downpour of rain kept them indoors that evening, so they read the newspapers and then talked over recent adventures, until just before bed-time, when they were joined by Mr. De Wolf, who had been writing letters in his room all the evening.

"Talking over the past, are you, boys?" said their friend, seating himself before them. "Now I know something even more interesting to talk about than that. What do you suppose it is?"

He looked at each lad in turn, and his frank, boyish face wore a happy smile. "Come, Jack," he said, in his hearty manner, "what is more interesting and more important than your past?"

"I don't know, sir," laughed Jack, "unless it may be my future."

"You are right, Jack. You boys are through with



the past, and you want to decide, right here, to-night, what your future is going to be."

Both boys were surprised by the sudden earnestness of the man's words. "Here's the whole thing in a nut-shell," he went on. "Ask yourselves to-night, boys, if you are going to drift or are you going to row. You are so situated, that if you desire to do so, you can return to the dredger, and work your way back to Alaska, hunt a little, fish a little, become miners or sailors, or nothing in particular. In other words, you can go through life by drifting hither and thither, whichever way fortune may send you.

"On the other hand, if you want to do it, you can say, 'I'm going to make my life count. I want to be somebody, and one of the helps to success is a good education, therefore I'm going to get the very best I can. And the point in view is, I'm not going to drift, I'm going to row.'

"Which are you going to do, Jack?" he asked suddenly, looking the boy in the eye. "Are you, the son of an educated father, with all your splendid ability, going to drift from this place to that, living among rough, ignorant men, or are you going to do something worth while for yourself? I'm going back



to Boston to-morrow. I would like to have both of you come with me. It will mean a different life from the one you've been living.

"There will not be so much fun and adventure. There will be more earnest work, and a great thought for the future. Think it over to-night, boys, and let me know in the morning. Good-night," he said, rising, and quietly leaving the room.

When Jack Tenfield and his companion were alone, they regarded each other without speaking for a full minute.

"Well, Jack, what do you say?" asked Burge, but Jack did not answer. He was in a brown study. Mr. De Wolf's words had started a new train of thought. He wanted to look things squarely in the face, and think it over. Until he had listened to the man's words, he had had every intention of going back to Alaska with Captain Herford. He had looked forward to the journey with the keenest pleasure. Now, the whole thing had suddenly become "flat, stale, and unprofitable." Visions of the future which Mr. De Wolf had hinted at began to arise before the boy's mind. Thoughts of his school, of his classmates, crowded themselves before him.

He could see all the various members of his class,



sitting in their places, just as they looked in the school-room.

Perhaps one of them would become a great lawyer, thought Jack, and he pictured, in his boyish way, one of his classmates standing before a crowded courtroom, pleading a case, holding the people spell-bound by his reason and eloquence. Another might turn out to be a famous doctor, or surgeon, whose name would mean that of a man of wonderful ability, and one might become a great preacher, and show men the right way, and comfort and save them.

Perhaps one would make some discovery in science, another might design a grand building, or write a good book, and while they were making their lives count, "what will I be doing?" asked the boy.

"Nothing," was his mind's answer.

"You've started to drift, and unless you stop right short and take the oars, you'll drift your life away. Are you going to do it?"

"Never, never, never," said the best that was in him. "I'm going to begin now."

"Burge," said Jack suddenly, coming out of his reverie. "I'm going back to Boston to-morrow, finish at the Latin School, and work my way through college."

"So am I," was the answer.



## CHAPTER XXVIII

### IN THE "KNOCKABOUT"

A FEW weeks after our boys arrived in Boston you would have found them one evening in a small side-room of a big, dreary-looking boarding house. The room was so small, and the boys bumped into each other so often in passing about, that Jack had laughingly called their sanctum the "Knockabout."

Our hero, who had gone into the newspaper business again, had just returned after his evening papers had been disposed of, and started in to copy some law briefs for a downtown lawyer, which work had been obtained through the efforts of Mr. Ford De Wolf.

Burge had been doing his home lessons, and was so deeply interested in studying some notes that he had not raised his eyes when Jack entered, but when a small clock on the mantel struck six, he put aside his books, and jumped to his feet. He glanced about the room in a puzzled way until his eye chanced to light upon a small oval table, which Jack was utilizing.



"H-m!" said Burge to himself, "I must do without that to-night."

He spread a fresh newspaper on the floor, near the foot of the bed, and placed a few dishes on it, which he carried from a shelf on the wall. His next move was to light a small oil-stove that stood on an old wooden chair, and boil a pot of water. A few other details were attended to, and he gave Jack a hearty slap on the back.

"The feast is served, Lucullus."

"Easy, easy," said Jack, drawing back. "I wouldn't get a blot on this page for fifty of your feasts, but what do I smell that's so good?" he cried, rising and looking about. "Where's the table?"

"Haven't you been writing on it for the last fifteen minutes, you absent-minded fellow?" retorted Burge.

"That's so," said the other with a laugh. "Oh, I see, we'll eat off the floor, by way of novelty, which is the spice of life, and about all the spice we can afford."

They sat themselves on the floor, Turkish fashion, while Jack exclaimed, "Say, Burge, aren't you getting wildly extravagant? Whence all these luxuries—cocoa, and butter, and cakes?"



"Don't thank me for them," said the other, smiling, "this afternoon, they were brought here by a young lady, who, I strongly suspect, spent all her pocket-money for months to come, by the amount of stuff she had with her."

"Nannie?" asked Jack.

"Who else could it be?" said Burge. "She's our guardian angel, but you'll see her to-night. She couldn't stay a minute this afternoon, but she's coming to-night, and I won't be here; just my luck."

At the rate that bread and butter and cakes were disposed of, and the quantity of cocoa that disappeared, it was evident that the appetites of the lads had not suffered by their small quarters in the "Knockabout."

In a few minutes Burge began to clear away the dishes, and this done he took his hat, and started for the door.

"Well, good-bye till eleven; don't forget to tell Nannie how much we enjoyed her goodies," was his parting remark, as he started for his nightly employment, which was tending a news-stand in one of the large depots. When he had gone, Jack lit a small lamp, and resumed his copying. At the end of an



hour he put it away with a sigh of thanks. Then he opened a drawer, and brought forth some closely-written sheets, which he started to read carefully, crossing out a word here, and adding one there. In a few minutes he was writing away as fast as his pen could fly over the paper.

He was interrupted shortly by a tap at the door, followed by the joyful appearance of Nannie. Not the Nannie of old, with the rebellious "pig-tails," and careless mien. This was a well-dressed young lady, whose hair was arranged neatly in one long braid, and tied under with a large black ribbon bow.

Moreover, this Nannie had the prettiest color in her smooth, clear skin, the dark eyes were very bright, and the smile very winsome. Indeed, had you seen our little Nannie the evening she came to her brother's room, you would have thought what an altogether attractive young lady Miss Nannie had grown to be.

"Oh," cried the girl, shutting the door, and gazing at her feet, "I almost stepped on that butter. What a careless boy you are to leave butter on the floor!"

"It was Burge, he forgot to put it in the ice chest," said Jack, stooping to get the butter.



"Ice chest!" exclaimed Nan, "where do you keep it?"

"Here," replied the boy, opening the window. Nannie picked her steps, and looked out of the window, where Burge had made a good-sized shelf.

"A very good idea," said Nan, "but, Jack, did you eat your supper off that newspaper? Now, that isn't nice a bit—you can have some small tray cloths, just as well as not. I'll get some for you."

"But who will wash and iron them, when they get soiled, Nan? That's an item to be considered."

"Why, I will, of course," returned the girl, "but stay, no, I can't do that, come to think of it; that is why I came here to-night, to tell you the news. Aunt Cordelia is going to sail for England next Saturday to see Isabelle, and I am going with her."

Jack whistled. "Whatever induced her to take you?" asked the boy.

"I haven't the least idea," answered Nan. "I supposed I was going back to school. I know she had a long letter from Isabelle the other day, and I think she made up her mind after reading it. In the meantime she said she would write to the Misses Fitts—they are the ladies who keep the boarding school—that I should be absent about one month."



"Well, that's jolly for you, Nan, going off to Europe—but we shall be awfully lonesome. You'll certainly be missed in the 'Knockabout.'"

"Oh, that's all very well for you to say, Jack Tenfield, but I don't forget that when you came home after all those wonderful adventures out West, you were in Boston three whole days before you came to see me," cried Nannie with a very reproachful smile.

"Couldn't help it, Nan, really; we were terribly busy getting settled here, and making arrangements for work, and all the rest. We didn't have a minute to spare. The very first free hour I had, I ran all the way to Mount Vernon Street."

While Jack had been talking, Nannie's eyes had been reading something on the sheet of closely written paper that lay on the small oval table.

Jack's eyes followed, and he turned slightly red.

"I'll tell you, Nan, what it means," he said, "although I have kept it a secret, even from Burge. I'm writing a collection of stories that I heard on the dredger."

"Oh, lovely!" cried Nan, beaming with smiles, and going a step nearer. "But what an odd, queer title, 'The Cave of Thumbs'!"



"When you read the story, you won't be surprised at the name," said the boy, smiling.

"I've already had one of those sea-stories accepted by a local paper. They paid me five dollars for it."

"Oh, Jack, isn't that just splendid! my brother a real, live author, who writes for papers! Oh," said Nan, brimming over with enthusiasm, "I've always wanted to write."

"So have I," said Jack, pleased to talk with Nan on a subject dear to his heart, and one that of late had filled his mind with bright dreams for the future. "Do you know, Nan, some day I'm going to start a newspaper?"

"And won't Auntie be surprised?" Nan broke in. "She said you had no taste for anything."

"Nannie," said Jack seriously, "you must promise not to tell her, at least not yet. I am only just beginning, and I would rather she didn't know anything about it."

"Of course, I won't say anything about it, if you object," returned the girl. "But I must go now," she said, glancing at the clock.

Jack reached for his hat and walked home with his sister.

When they got back to the "Knockabout," he sat



down to his stories and wrote away, till Burge's footstep told him that it was after eleven o'clock.

He put his writing aside reluctantly. He was not tired of the work, and he liked nothing better in the world than to do it. Some one has said, "Where there is love, there is no labor."



## CHAPTER XXIX

### A PRESENT

ONE Sunday evening there was a tap on the door of the "Knockabout" and in answer to Jack's "Come in," a large bunch of chrysanthemums made its appearance, followed by a small young person, with a very broad smile.

"Why, Terry, this is good," cried Jack, pushing forward the only chair, and seating himself on the bed, "whoever thought of seeing you here?"

"I never knowed, I mean knewed, you was in Boston till last week. Mr. De Wolf told me about it and he gimme, no, gev me, your address, so de first chanct I could leave the firm, I came."

Terry paused for several seconds, eyeing Jack curiously, "D'yer notice anything new or strange about me?" he inquired at last, with a quizzical look on his small face.

"Well, nothing in particular," replied Jack, "you are looking remarkably well, and, let me see—you seem to be more particular about choosing your words."



“Dat’s it, you’ve hit it,” replied the smiling Terry. “I’m having hencounters wid de langwidge.”

Jack laughed aloud at Terry’s quaint face as he made the remark.

“Yer see, it happened in this way,” resumed Terry, with a grin. “De best friend I have on dis earth is Mr. Ford De Wolf. Dere’s no corners on dat gentleman, he’s the same all ’round—well, he says to me, not long ago, says he: ‘Terry, I hear very good accounts of you from your employer, and I’m very much pleased. Now, I tell you what you must do,’ says he. ‘You must go to night-school, Terry,’ says he, ‘learn to write a good, plain hand; learn to read and spell and figure correctly. Read good books,’ says he, ‘but, above all, stop using slang—stop it at once. Take notice,’ says he, ‘how other people talk, and speak as well as you possibly can.’ He said lots more, and he gave me a list of books to read. I’ve got a library card, and, oh, say, Jack, I’m a-readin’ about de queerest bloke, an’ his name was Daniel Quilp; it’s great. Well, I must tell yer about de other. I began to git on to me job—no, I don’t mean dat—dat’s bad. I mean dat I began to watch and listen to the folks what came into the store.”

“Terry, don’t say, ‘folks what came’; say ‘folks who came.’”



"Dat's it—dat's it!" said the little fellow quickly; "every time I say it wrong you tell me."

"Very well," said Jack, "if you make a bad mistake and I know it, I'll correct it if I can, when you've finished your story; and, by the way, Terry, say 'that,' not 'dat,' and 'this,' not 'dis.'"

"All right," replied the lad, "I'll try, and now I'll tell you how I came near getting into trouble."

"There was an old man came into the store one day, and he was very busy looking over some rare orchids. Bimeby I see him looking on de floor, and all around, and he said to me: 'Boy, have you any idea where I left my pot money?' Well, Jack, dere was a squelcher. 'No, sir,' says I, wondering in me mind that such a tony old gent would talk about pot money, and carry it around like dat—that."

"'Did you win it?' says I, looking all round de shelves and on de floor."

"'No, boy,' says he, 'a lady gave it to me; I wouldn't like to lose it.'"

"Well, dis was a staggerer. A lady gave him his pot money—de old gambler! But he wasn't goin' ter fool me like dat."

"'How much was in de pot?' says I, looking like a innercent kid."



“ ‘I don’t understand,’ says the old gentleman. ‘Do you mean the amount of coin in my pot money?’ ”

“ Wid dat speech I got shaky in de ribs, an’ I laffed. ‘I’m not quite shuah,’ he went on, ‘a few bills and some small change.’ ”

“ Well, Jack, just then my eye caught a glimpse of a big black pocketbook layin’ in a corner, an’ I left the man and ran with it to the cashier.

“ The old gent was lookin’ all the time, an’ he never raised his eyes; but when I came back he said he’d call in again.

“ On his way out, I see him talking to the boss, and pretty soon he called me up.

“ De boss asked me if I had seen a black pocketbook anywhere.

“ ‘Sure,’ says I. ‘I gave it to the cashier.’ ”

“ At this the old man looked very much surprised. ‘Why, my good boy,’ says he, ‘you told me you had not seen it.’ ”

“ ‘Pardon me, sir,’ says I, ‘you was askin’ me all de time about your pot money. How did I know dat the pot money was in the black pocketbook?’ ”

“ Then the boss he laffed, and the old gentleman he laffed, and got his pocketbook and went out. Then they all told me what ‘port monnaie’ meant—a pocketbook.



Dat was one tussle I had wid de langwidge; but I'm improvin'."

"That's good, Terry, and I'm real glad you are going to night-school. Do you like it?"

"Yes, I like it fine. Last night de teacher told us about a camel, and read about him outer a book. Say, Jack, isn't he a tank, dat camel? He drinks so much and den keeps it till he gets dry; no wonder he's hump-backed!"

At this point the door opened, and Burge burst into the room, waving a letter.

"It's for you, Jack. You should have had it yesterday. It was sent care of Mr. De Wolf."

Burge had not seen Terry, who was partly concealed by the huge bunch of flowers.

Jack introduced them, and Burge, who had heard much of the former little bootblack, regarded him with interest.

"If you'll pardon me," said Jack, "I'll just see what my letter is all about. The postmark is San Francisco. I wonder who is writing to me."

Jack opened the letter, and as he did, a bill fell upon the floor. Burge picked it up and gave a short whistle. "One hundred dollars! Why, Jack," he cried, "who sent it?"



"What is this, anyway—one hundred dollars for me?" cried Jack.

"Read the letter," said Burge, growing excited; "that will explain," while Terry's round eyes looked from one to the other in wonder.

"There isn't any letter, not a word. Hold on, yes there is," said the boy, turning to the last page of the sheet of paper, on which the following was written, in a large, firm hand:

"This little present may be useful to Jack Tenfield, from one who wishes him success."

That was all. There was not the slightest clew to the generous writer. The boys were so thoroughly surprised that they could not speak, but stood gazing at the written words, and turning it over, as if there must be something more.

"Whoever could have sent this to me, do you suppose?" asked Jack, looking at Burge, and even at Terry, for an explanation.

"You kin search me," said Terry.

Burge was still pondering over the writing.

They exhausted every possible theory as to the sender, and finally gave it up as a mystery that might be solved at some future time.



"Look here, friends," said Terry, who had been very quiet, while the two boys let their imaginations run riot in regard to the sender.

"Seems to me, if I was you, de thought wouldn't bother me now about who sent dat money. De puzzle to me 'd be ter find out if it was de real article, or if some one was trying to shove de 'queer.' "

"What do you mean?" asked Jack quickly, "counterfeit?"

"Sure," nodded Terry.

"I never thought of that," said Jack; "but, of course it's genuine. Look at the sentiment. It's from somebody who knows me, and really wants me to use it."

"Dat's no proof," said Terry. "De people of dis world are not giving away hundred-dollar bills as if dey was cigar labels. I tell you, Jack, you want to find out about dat for sure."

"There may be some truth in what Terry says," ventured Burge.

"I feel confident that it is genuine," replied Jack, "but I'll find out for certain to ease your minds about it. Let me see. I'll take it downstairs and ask Mr. McAleer."

"Hold on, dere!" shouted Terry, jumping up and



boldly placing his small body before the door. "Is he de herrin' what runs dis maze?"

"Of course," said Jack; "he owns this boarding house."

"Den, not on your natural, will you show him a hundred-dollar bill an' ask him if it's genewine," said Terry. "W'y, Jack," he went on, "youse awful smart 'bout a good many t'ings, but youse as innercent as a mornin' glory 'bout others. W'y, dat McAleer would pinch it, good or bad, sure as you are seein' me."

"Well, how shall I find out, then?" asked Jack.

"Dere's just one man I'd trust wid dat bill over night in Bosting," said Terry earnestly.

He waited, to impress his words upon the boys, who asked in one breath, "Who?"

"Mr. Ford De Wolf," said Terry, with decision.

"You are right, Terry," answered Jack. "I'll go to him at once."



## CHAPTER XXX

### A LETTER

THE money was genuine, so Mr. Ford De Wolf attested. He was as much surprised at the gift as the boys themselves.

When they had talked the matter over for the fiftieth time, Jack decided to put the money in the bank.

“We are getting along finely, our expenses are few, and we do not intend to increase them,” said Jack, “but next year that money will come in very well.”

One night not long after, the boys had hurried supper, and when Burge had started for his work, Jack sat down to study his home lessons. When satisfied that he was perfect for the next day, he put away his books and brought out his stories. The “Cave of Thumbs” was finished, and he was now busy on a tale told by the mate, called “Devil Water.” The gist of the story was that a party of sailors who had been wrecked and suffered hunger and thirst for days, had reached an uninhabited island, where vegetation was luxurious, and food and drink were found in abundance.



The story related that a certain huge plant that the men found there bore a large, cup-shaped flower, filled with a colorless liquid, delicious and refreshing to the taste, but which, after it had been drunk, made men mad, and caused them to act in a most inhuman manner.

Jack was still writing away on the tale when Burge returned, and, after waiting several minutes, told his busy companion that he was so very tired he could sleep standing.

The next morning Jack had a letter from Nannie, which he read aloud to Burge, while the latter was trying to thread a needle with a very long thread, preparatory to sewing on a button.

“Dear Jack,” ran the letter. “I wish you were here to enjoy all the good times I have had since I came to England. In the first place, I must inform you of the fact that you are an uncle to the dearest, sweetest mite of a baby girl in the world, who is going to be called ‘Cordelia.’ So you are really, truly Uncle Jack. Doesn’t that make you throw out your chest? Well, if it does not, here is a piece of news that should—at least Sister Isabelle thinks so.

“On her father’s side baby Cordelia can trace her ancestors back to the time of Elizabeth. Isabelle thought it was necessary to impress this fact on me,



because I am a mere American; but I reminded baby, right before her ma and pa, that she could also trace some of her ancestors to the glorious times of George Washington, when they were more useful than ornamental.

"There are some beautiful old places over here, and I have just reveled in long walks to nooks and corners famous in history.

"Among the few people I have met is a Mrs. Ormiston, Isabelle's neighbor. She lives quite alone in a fine, old house with a beautiful garden to interest her. But she is not interested in it, or in anything else in the world that I can see, although she is very sweet and lovable.

"Isabelle told me that this lady had some great sorrow in her early life, from which she has never quite recovered.

"I am coming home next week, alone, as Aunt Cordelia is going to spend a few months with her little namesake, of whom she seems to be very fond. She has written to Mrs. McNaughton, and I will start at once for school, but may get a chance to run in and see you boys.

"I hope you don't eat your meals off the floor. If you do, please remove the butter before I call, as I might slip with disastrous consequences. Tell Burge I am quite a sailor, and only wanted to die once, coming over. I brought your Western picture and it called forth a good bit of admiration; but there, I won't tell



you, because all boys are conceited, when they grow up, and you are 'growing up' very fast.

"I suppose I ought to end this letter with some good, sisterly advice. Well, then, Jack, keep up your courage, and if things go wrong look on the bright side.

"Here's for auld lang syne:

" 'The bright side, the bright side,  
My brother, is always the right side.'

"NANNIE."

That night Jack worked harder than ever writing away on his stories. Having completed his home lessons in the study hour at school he had been looking forward to a long evening of uninterrupted writing.

He had almost completed the collection of yarns that he had heard, and which had impressed him very much; in fact, he was on the last one, a mysterious tale told by a wizened little sailor named Hinchpin.

Jack was going to call this story, "Hinchpin's Ghost," but as Hinchpin was alive and well, our hero thought it might give a wrong impression, as the little sailor was not the haunted person; so in his boyish mind he decided to call it "The Ghost of the *David Shallcross*," that being the name of the haunted ship, on which the wizened little sailor had seen with his own



eyes the floating form of a woman in white, with an awful fear in her face.

The subsequent wreck of the ill-fated ship, with the loss of all on board but two of the crew, their thrilling adventures and hairbreadth escape, made quite a remarkable tale, and was a fitting end—a sort of climax to all the previous stories.

Jack decided to call the collection, "Tales of the Sea," and that night, before he went to bed, he got his manuscript all ready to send to a certain publisher the following day.



## CHAPTER XXXI

### BROTHER AND SISTER

THE months had grown into bleak November, and all was well in the "Knockabout." It was not quite as comfortable, perhaps, as it had been, especially on a wet night, and it was both cold and wet one evening in the early part of the month, when Jack returned from his work soaked to the skin.

The next morning he had a bad cold, and felt quite unlike himself. He tried to "shake it off," but he came home from school a few days after with a pain in his head, and a "tight feeling" in his chest.

The following morning Jack was a very sick boy, and Burge stayed at home to take care of him. Burge, who had never been ill in his life, knew very little about sickness, but when he felt Jack's head hot and feverish, he grew alarmed, and called in a doctor.

Burge learned from the medical man that Jack had a bad attack of pneumonia. As the sick boy turned and tossed on his bed, he frequently called for Nannie, and, at the doctor's suggestion, Burge decided to write



to Nan, and acquaint her with the fact of her brother's illness.

When Jack had dozed off to a short sleep, Burge sat down to write his first letter to a young lady. If it had been any other girl in the world but Nannie Tenfield, Burge would have written a short note at random, and not given the matter very much thought. As it was, he carefully dated his letter, and then revolved in his mind how he should begin.

As he could think of but one way he hastily wrote, "Dear Nannie," and stopped short. How queer it looked! thought the boy. He held the paper at arm's length, and read again "Dear Nannie." Then he held it at different angles to see just how "Dear Nannie" looked from every point of view. "No," thought Burge, "that will never do—it sounds silly." At the mere thought of it he blushed, tore up the sheet of paper, and took a fresh one. This, also, was carefully dated and, after various invisible scribbles, "Dear Friend Nannie," was written, and viewed from various angles.

"She'd make fun of that," said Burge to himself. He couldn't stand appearing ridiculous to a girl, and least of all to Nannie, so that also was torn in halves, and Burge took another sheet of paper.



Before he began to write the third time, he did a little thinking aloud to this effect, "I'm not going to write 'Dear Miss Tenfield,' even if she is becoming quite a young lady. I never call her anything but Nannie, so why shouldn't I write 'Dear Nannie'? Oh, pshaw! you wouldn't call her 'Dear Nannie'—let's see how 'Friend Nannie' looks. Why wouldn't that be all right, she really is a friend?"

After this soliloquy, Burge took a fresh sheet of paper, and wrote boldly:

"FRIEND NANNIE: I am sorry to write you——"

Burge stopped again. "Well, that's a funny thing to say to her," mused the critic. "You're glad to write to her, you know you are. Oh, tear it up, and begin all over again."

After a few more attempts the following was written:

"FRIEND NANNIE: Jack is very sick, and calls for you a great deal. The doctor thought it would be a good thing for him if you could come to see him.

"Your friend,

"BURGE TEBBETT."

Having read this several times, Burge decided that it was "correct," and sent it on its way.



In a few days Nannie appeared, and constituted herself at once as head nurse. Burge had to move to other quarters and, small as the "Knockabout" was, the boarding mistress was called upon to furnish it with a few extra pieces of furniture.

The doctor called every day for a time, but after the fever subsided he dropped in only occasionally, praised Nannie for her excellent care, and encouraged his patient in every possible way.

Terry was an almost daily visitor, and kept the little room supplied with flowers.

One evening when the sick boy was well on the road to recovery, and Nan had been reading to him, he suddenly sat up in bed, a most dejected expression on his pale face.

"What is it, Jack?" asked the girl, turning the book in her lap.

"Nothing, Nan—only I was just thinking what a disappointing thing this sickness has been to me. I don't mind being absent from school so much, because by extra work I can make that all up; but it has put me back in ever so many ways, and made a big hole in my savings for next year."

"Never mind that, Jack. You will have enough, and you must not feel so bad about this sickness. You



might have been a great deal worse, laid up for months, perhaps, and suppose you had to go into a hospital. You wouldn't like that, would you?"

Jack shook his head. "No, indeed! it has been a little like home having you here."

"Did Terry bring those?" asked the boy suddenly, letting his eye fall on a beautiful bunch of pinks.

"No, Mr. De Wolf brought them this morning, while you were sleeping. He's been to New York for nearly three weeks, and did not know of your illness, till Terry told him last night. He had quite a talk with the doctor this morning about moving you out of this house, but the doctor said you were getting on so well that he would not advise it just now."

Jack was silent for some minutes after Nan had spoken. He sat there, wide awake, in deep thought.

"Say, Nan, open that little drawer and under my Latin book you'll see a letter; read it, please."

Nannie obeyed, and in opening the letter saw that it bore the name and address of a publisher in another city.

"MR. JACK TENFIELD.

"*Dear Sir:* We have received your MS. entitled 'Tales of the Sea,' and regret to say that, while



they have a great deal of merit, there is a certain crudeness in the manner of telling that is not desirable for our paper.

"If you could polish these stories so that they would sound less boyish, we might consider them. It has occurred to us that you might be able to write a boy's story. If you do so, we shall be pleased to see the book."

"There, Nan, is the result of all my labor, and the end of my glorious dreams of future literary work. Just think of the good, long hours I wasted over that stuff; burning the midnight oil until every bone was cramped and aching. Just pass that bundle over here, Nan—tied with string—the sooner that trash is consigned to the waste-basket the better."

"You are not going to destroy those stories!" declared Nan, holding the package of returned MS. in her hand.

"Yes, I am, Nan. What is the use of keeping them?"

"Why, Jack Tenfield, that letter from the publishers is splendidly encouraging. They don't return your MS. with thanks not a bit of it. If you'll polish them up, they will take them, I know; and more than all, they think you have the talent to write a boy's book.



Of course, they don't know that you are only a boy yourself, although they discovered that your language was boyish in parts. I tell you, Jack, it's very flattering, and you can do it, too."

Jack smiled doubtfully, but his face brightened at Nan's words.

"I wish I *could* write a boy's story," he said, "but I don't know enough yet, perhaps I may sometime, I shan't give up."

"Yes, you could do it now, Jack. Oh, Jack," and Nan, in her excitement, began to wave the MS. over her head. "I have an idea! Write your own story, just what happened to yourself——"

"But, Nan, that wouldn't be interesting. There really isn't much to tell."

"Yes, there is; yes, there is!" cried Nan with enthusiasm, "It isn't every boy who is out of school over a year; and in that time goes to another city, away off, has the adventures that you have had on a big dredger, and all that sort of thing. Write it, Jack; begin it to-night, and I'll help you, and those stories that you really heard can be brought into your story, when you describe the life on the dredger."

"Yes, that's so, Nan," said Jack, growing interested.



"And I'll help," said the girl for the second time. "Do you know, Jack, I'm pretty fair in composition. It's my best study in school, and, oh, it will be such fun! You can dictate it all to me. Instead of reading aloud to you, we'll do that. And you must tell all about Burge in your story. Burge is such a nice boy! and, Jack, do you know that there is an air about him—he looks sort of, well, er—distinguished; don't you think so?"

"Oh, boys don't think as much about looks as you girls do," was the answer. "Burge is a pretty fair-looking fellow, though," admitted Jack.

"Burge Tebbett!" exclaimed Nan. "Why, I should say he's——"

"Present, may he come in?" asked the object of the discussion, looking into the room after a knock.

Nan wondered how much of the conversation he had heard.

"I've had a letter from home," said Burge. "Mother wants us to spend the Thanksgiving holidays with her, and we must all go, too," he added. "She won't take any excuse." Burge thereupon read the letter aloud.

"If father hadn't been laid up with rheumatism, she would have been up here long ago."



"I'd like to go very much," said Nan, "but I hardly think Jack will be strong enough to go so far."

"Oh, we'll manage in some way," said Burge hopefully.

At this point there was a loud knock at the door, and when Burge opened it a boy placed a telegram in his hand.

Burge hastily read the following:

"Come home at once. Important news.

"JOHN TEBBETT."

Burge passed the telegram to Jack, greatly surprised at its contents.

"I wouldn't waste a minute, if I were you," said Jack, "it's something pretty sudden, whatever it is. He doesn't mention anything out of the ordinary in his letter."

"That's so," said Burge. "Well, I'm off, and good-bye; and I'll see you Thanksgiving if not before."

When he had gone, Nannie and Jack talked it over for a while, until the boy fell asleep.

For the next few days Nan was busy writing away from Jack's dictation. Her encouragement and enthusiasm had infected the boy to such an extent that he was greatly interested in the telling of his own



story, which was progressing very well, indeed, as also was the patient, who was now able to be up.

One morning, in the wee sma' hours while Jack was fast asleep, Nannie wrote several chapters on her own responsibility, and then threw herself on the lounge, too tired to go to her own room to bed.

When she looked out of the window a few hours later, there was a thin covering of snow on the roofs of the houses and in the narrow yards below.

"It looks like winter," thought Nan with a shiver, "and it's almost Thanksgiving time."

She turned and glanced toward the bed where her brother was still sleeping. "Poor Jack! how white he looks; I hope he'll be strong again soon."

Her eyes wandered over the shabby little room, that was more chilly and comfortless in the early hours than at any other time.

How narrow and cheerless it all seemed! All at once the picture of the old yellow mansion came before her eyes, the great rooms with the cheerful open fires, and the winter sun streaming through the windows.

Nan's eyes sought the snow-covered roofs again, and she gazed in a revery, while a flood of happy memories surged through her mind. How happy it had been, when her father's face brightened the merry holiday



time! And now he had passed away! and the old house was theirs no longer; and Isabelle was married and far away, and had no interest in them. Aunt Cordelia's gloomy mansion was shut up and only she and Jack were left together.

Nannie's lips trembled, and the tears began to trickle down her cheeks. Suddenly she sank to her knees, and buried her face in both hands, overcome by a sudden realization of the loneliness and sadness of it all. For a while Nan's tears fell fast, then she felt better, her thoughts were calmer, and she prayed softly.

"O Heavenly Father," said Nan. "Spare us to each other, Jack and me. Protect us and guide our footsteps in the right path, and O my Father, let me be a help and comfort to him always."

A stir in the bed made Nan jump to her feet, with an assumed air of busying herself about the room.

In a very short time Nan was serving toast and tea and soft-boiled eggs to Jack, and had such a bright face and cheery voice that no one would ever have detected the heartache back of it all.

"There's exactly four inches of sunshine comes into this room," said Nan. "I've really measured it, but this morning it seems almost three times as much."

She pointed to a large vase, filled with yellow



chrysanthemums, placed on the table beside the bit of sunshine. The yellow of the flowers seemed like a continuation of it, thanks to Nan's clever arrangement, and made a wonderfully bright spot in the cheerless little room.

Later in the morning the doctor called for the last time, and told Jack he might go out if the day was fair, for a short walk.

Our hero was delighted at the prospect and, just before dinner, he and Nan walked up and down the street.



## CHAPTER XXXII

### THANKSGIVING

THANKSGIVING dawn promised a day of sunshine, over a cold, crisp atmosphere. A light fall of snow the night before gave a wintry touch to everything.

As Nannie washed up the few dishes she had used for breakfast, she thought it was going to be even more dreary than she had anticipated.

She glanced at Jack, who was sitting at the window, looking over one of his school books.

"It's strange we haven't heard from Burge since he went home, isn't it?" asked the boy suddenly.

"Yes," replied Nan, "we shall be quite alone for our Thanksgiving dinner, but I've thought of the nicest thing to do, Jack! We'll get all ready, take a little walk in the sunshine, and then go into a big hotel and have a good dinner. I'm real hungry. What do you think of my plan?"

"Isn't it terribly expensive at those hotels?" ventured Jack. "How much do you suppose it would cost?"



"Won't cost *you* a cent; this is my invitation. I invite you to dinner, Jack, and you can't refuse. You might if I had cooked it myself," added Nan, with a laugh.

Jack smiled. "Say, Nan, do you remember the chickens you roasted in the old house that time Nora was away, and we were expecting Mrs. McNaughton?"

"Will I ever forget them?" laughed Nan. "And the cake! Oh, Jack, that terrible cake, that was so wonderfully made! Do you remember all the eggs I put in it?" Nan went on, "and the sugar? There was enough sugar in it to sink a tub."

"Yes," laughed the boy, "and cleaning out those chickens—you thought there were snakes in them," and Jack began to laugh heartily at the recollection, and was joined by Nan.

"Oh, Jack, the yellow soap! will you ever forget the yellow soap, to grease the pans?"

In the midst of the laughing, there came a knock at the door, followed by the smiling face of Mr. Ford De Wolf.

"Well, I'm glad to hear such good news as healthy laughter," said the man, beaming on the boy and girl, and walking to the window in his brisk, cheery way.



"It is rather early to make a call," he went on, taking out his watch, "but the fact is, we are all due at Horn Point to-day, just as quickly as we can get there, and if we hurry we can get a train in twenty minutes; so if you'll put on your wraps we'll start at once."

"Oh, goody!" cried Nan, putting the last cup away, and making a dive for her hat and coat, "how nice to go there to-day!"

When they reached the street they found Mr. De Wolf's carriage awaiting them. They entered, and were soon rattling over the city pavements on their way to the train that was to take them in a few hours to quite a different scene.

Nan was so happy she was bubbling over with merriment. To think that they would not have to spend Thanksgiving in that poky little room, all alone, with never a kindly face to meet them! Instead, Jack would meet Burge, and feel ever so much better, and have a nice, wholesome dinner! Oh, it was good! and there were many things to make one happy and thankful!

When the first flush of the excitement had worn off, Nan wondered if Mr. De Wolf was coming all the way. He was an old friend of Captain Tebbett's, but she was rather surprised that he was going to spend his Thanksgiving there. However, as he said nothing



about the matter, Nannie did not ask any questions. She listened to his pleasant voice, telling Jack all sorts of good news. Nan chattered away until she fell at last into a sort of reverie that often falls upon one in a railway journey.

The houses and large buildings were fast disappearing, as they steamed along in the train. By and by, bare fields and straggling trees met the eye on all sides.

A large white house on the top of a hill caught Nan's eye as they whizzed along. She wondered if the people who lived in it were preparing for a merry Thanksgiving dinner.

One of her school friends had described her home in just such a house. This caused a vision of the school to come before her; and her classmates, with their different peculiarities, appeared to her mind's eye. She could not think of Tessie without picturing something edible hidden away somewhere on that young gourmand's person.

Glancing suddenly at Jack, who had become very quiet, she saw that his eyes were closed, and, knowing his weak condition, she wondered anxiously if the journey would be too much for him. Mr. De Wolf seemed to read her thoughts. He assured her that Jack was a little tired, and that was all.



They were now passing miles of woodland on one side, and immense tracts of marsh-land, with here and there a glimpse of the sea, on the other.

After another hour's ride they had a continuous sight of the ocean, and Nan knew they were not very far from Horn Point.

She lapsed into silence again, and was aroused from her reverie by the usual stir that is made by the passengers about to alight from a train. Glancing out of the window, Nannie saw the well-remembered depot, a bleak little barn-like structure as gray and wintry-looking as the sea behind it.

A carriage was waiting, and the little party were soon driving through the long village road to the Point.

When Nannie opened Mrs. Tebbett's front door, that led directly into the large kitchen, she saw a buxom-looking woman bending over the stove. As Mrs. Tebbett was spare and tall, Nan wondered who the stranger could be.

"Stranger, indeed!" said Nan, a second later. "The idea of not knowing Nora; but who ever thought of seeing you here?"

"Who, indeed?" echoed Jack.

"An' didn't Mr. De Wolf tell yer?" said Nora, showing all her fine teeth.



"No; did he know you were here?" asked Nan, surprised.

"Well, no one knew better," said Nora, smiling. "My brother got married again, that I'd been keeping house for, an' I got out an' I've been working for Mr. De Wolf and Mr. Samuel for nigh a month now, an' Mr. Samuel, he's gone to Europe, and Mr. Ford sent me down here two days ago, to help Mrs. Tebbett over Thanksgiving, and sure it's like old times entirely, to be at Horn Point wid you all."

"And where is everybody?" asked Nan, feeling wonderfully at home with Nora's loving, smiling face before her.

"They're all present or accounted for," said some one, opening the door.

"Terry!" exclaimed Jack and Nannie in one voice, as the boy appeared with an armful of wood.

Terry made a bow low enough to deposit his wood on the floor, just as the sitting room door opened, and Burge stood on the threshold, and beckoned to Jack and Nan to come in.

When Nannie stepped into the room she thought she must be dreaming, for there, sitting on one of the hard, straight-backed chairs, was the sweet-faced little



Englishwoman, Mrs. Ormiston. For a second Nan could not see any one else in the room.

"It is about time I explained," said Burge, taking Mrs. Ormiston's hand, who arose, and stood smiling beside the stalwart youth.

"This lady is my mother," he said, looking at Nan and Jack. "You remember that picture, Jack, we had taken out in Seattle? Well, Nannie took it to England to show your sister, Isabelle; and, luckily for me, she left it behind her when she sailed for America.

"One day, shortly after, when Mrs. Ormiston was visiting your sister, she saw it, and was surprised by the resemblance that I bore to my father. She showed Isabelle one of his photographs, and your sister thought the resemblance remarkable. Well, to make a short story, your sister remembered the story of my life at Horn Point; how I was saved from a wrecked ship, etc., and when she told Mrs. Ormiston—I mean, mother," corrected Burge, smiling,—“a correspondence was immediately begun with Captain Tebbett. He told her about the clothes I wore that were saved, and bore the initials, 'A. O.' Mother came over at once, and found me—well, I guess that's all, except I went up a few days ago to see Mr. De Wolf, and he planned this little surprise for to-day.”



"Why, it sounds just like a story in a book," said Nan with delight.

Jack was silent for a minute, then he shook Burge's hand.

"I congratulate you," he said, smiling, "you don't know how lucky you are; some poor fellows haven't one mother on this earth, but you have two."

This remark made the eyes of the little English-woman look suspiciously moist, but a broad smile broke over the rigid features of Mrs. Tebbett.

"The hardest thing of all 'll be to call him Arthur," said the Captain's wife. "I can't git used to it no way—Arthur Ormiston—an' all the time I'll want to say Burge Tebbett."

"And you just say it, mother," returned Burge, addressing the Captain's wife. "I'll always be Burge Tebbett to you and father. I've thought it all over," he continued, "and my name is going to be Arthur Burge Tebbett Ormiston. It's a long name, I'll admit, but it's a good one."

The old Captain, who had thus far maintained a discreet silence, glanced approvingly at the boys.

"Well, Burge, there's this much about it. You fit a high-sounding name better than some folks I've met. There was Steve Lea. He was a awful little rooster,



but consequential as a strutting turkey. Steve's uncle, John Babbitt, up an' died one day, an' left Steve a tidy fortin' on condition that he'd take his name, along with the money.

"Now, Steve took his uncle's name, of course, but there was no law against stickin' in his own, too, and Steve was proud of it, jest because it belonged to him. So he called himself Stephen Lea John Babbitt, but they guded him 'bout makin' himself out two men, when he warn't big enough for one.

"After twisting it every which way, he finally began to sign himself S. L. John Babbitt, an' that finished him, 'cause some wag asked if S. L. stood for Small Loss, and it stuck f'rever."

This story was followed by another, and the Captain's remarks caused a general laugh.

By and by, while Nannie began to ask Mrs. Ormiston ever so many questions about baby Cordelia, and the less important members of the same family, Jack and Burge left the house together for a walk to the end of the Captain's float.

As they sauntered along, they looked across at the shanty on Sun Island, where they had had their first taste of camping out. It did not look quite so inviting in the sharp November air as it did in the summer



days, but still there was a tight, weather-proof look about it, that was, on the whole, very satisfactory.

"Well, Jack," said his companion, "I suppose you are thinking what change all this is going to make in our plans."

"Yes," returned Jack, "I suppose you won't have any further use for the 'Knockabout.'"

"That is true," was the answer, "and you won't either."

Jack glanced quickly at his companion, who went on, "I am going to finish my education as I have begun, but there will be no need to work my way through college, because we are rich.

"Mother is going to take a house in Boston, and we will live with her. It will mean home for us, Jack," said Burge, slapping his companion gently on the back, "and the 'Knockabout' a thing of the past."

"That is very generous of you, Burge, and I appreciate it, but you must not forget that I am not rich, and I've got to work my way."

"Well, we won't talk about that, now," said Burge hastily, "because, in the first place, you are not strong enough to do anything at present, and all I want to say is, you must make your home with us; that, at least,



you cannot refuse, and mother and I have talked over plans for the future, and are counting on that."

"It seems too good to be true," replied Jack. "Yes, indeed! I shall be more than happy to accept such a great kindness."

"But I haven't told you half my story, yet," said Burge. "My father's only brother came to America when a young man, and made a fortune in the real estate business right here in Boston. He never returned to his home in England, and when a severe sickness came upon him, he wrote to my father, begging him to come and see him, and bring his wife and boy.

"The boy, especially, he wanted to see, asking it almost as a dying request.

"My mother was not well enough to take the trip at the time, but I was a sturdy little chap three years old, and father decided to take me with him.

"You know the rest, Jack. My father was lost, almost within sight of the city he had hoped to visit. That same night his brother, the wealthy uncle I had never seen, died and left his fortune to me. It was supposed, of course, that I had perished. All that was just fourteen years ago this month," added the boy.

"It is all so wonderful," returned Jack, "that I don't think I have quite grasped it yet."



"Oh, yes!" cried Burge, "and there is another thing I must tell you. I think I know where your present of one hundred dollars came from."

"Really, Burge?" said the other, greatly interested.

"We had a letter from Captain Herford the other day, and he asked particularly about you. He said that just before he left Seattle on this last trip he had a visit from John Seers, the brother of the man whose skeleton we found. He wanted to know your address, and the Captain told him that anything sent care of Mr. De Wolf would reach you. So there's one mystery cleared," laughed Burge.

"But I don't understand why he should have sent it to me!" cried Jack.

"Oh, I do," said the other. "He'd taken quite a fancy to you that night in the woods, anybody could see that. Don't you remember, he said you reminded him of his brother when a boy?"

"Yes, I remember, Burge, but still I cannot see why he should have done it."

"Captain Herford wrote us in his letter," said Burge, "that he had sold one of the claims he had inherited through the brother's death, and made a great deal of money."



"Well, I must write and thank him," said Jack quickly.

But Burge hastily rejoined, "No, you can't do that, because he disappeared as suddenly as he came, and no one knows anything about him."

At this point the boys started to retrace their steps to the cottage, just as Terry made his appearance, and blew the old horn.

"Have you been talking with Terry recently?" asked Burge.

"No," returned the other; "is there anything to explain about him?"

Burge laughed. "Nothing to explain, but he is improving wonderfully in his language. He uses very little slang. When it does crop out, he apologizes, and he really says 'this' and 'that.'"

"Good! I am glad to hear it," replied Jack. "Mr. De Wolf says there is the making of a man in Terry."

"Mr. De Wolf," laughed Burge, "is Terry's ideal of all that is perfection here below."

There was a real Thanksgiving odor when the boys re-entered the cottage, and a sound of chatter and laughter that was good to hear.

The little back parlor, with its straight-backed chairs, the tiny table in the center, just large enough to hold



the family Bible, the oval mirror, hung from the wall with a red cord, the quaint pictures on the walls of very white ships and very green water, the huge shells on the floor, the stuffed parrot in a corner, and over all the laughter of happy voices, made a picture not soon to be forgotten.

But Nora had announced dinner, and the Captain had made a droll speech that caused a ripple of mirth, and he had bowed low to the little Englishwoman, and offered her his arm, and Mr. De Wolf had followed his example and escorted Mrs. Tebbett, straight and slim, in her best black silk and white apron, and Burge had made his way to Nan, who smiled and blushed, and Jack and Terry had followed the merry group.

To be sure, they had only a step to walk to the table, but it was taken with all the ceremony possible under the circumstances. And the dinner! It took Nora's deft fingers to have the turkey just the right brown, and sweet and juicy, with an oyster dressing that Terry afterwards whispered to Jack was "nicer than pie." And they had cranberry jelly and "all the fixin's" deliciously flavored; and because it wasn't a fashionable dinner party, but just a wholesome, old-fashioned one, everybody praised the good things.

The Captain told stories that brought tears of



laughter to Nannie's eyes, and he insisted on Mr. De Wolf's making a speech, and then declared that the greatest speech he had ever heard was made by a deaf and dumb gentleman. "An' by the way, I didn't hear it—I saw it!"

"Great, indeed," said Mrs. Tebbett. "I want ter know."

"In its results, Sarah, it was remarkable, for when he began there was only one dumb man in the party, but when he got through there were twelve."

When the pumpkin pie and plum pudding were introduced, Jack artlessly remarked that Terry was not doing justice to either, and this led to the story of the pie for breakfast, to the amusement of Mrs. Ormiston and Mr. De Wolf, though Captain Tebbett declared that there were worse things than pie for breakfast, and he, for one, would prefer a good "slab o' mince pie ter frogs' legs any time; it was more satisfyin' an' more fillin'."

"Frogs' legs!" exclaimed Sarah, "Whoever heard tell o' such a heathenish dish? I can't b'lieve any white man would eat 'em."

Whereupon the Captain told his spouse that her beliefs were bounded by Horn Point. But there must be an end to all pleasant gatherings, and so there was to this happy little party.



The guests had left the small seaside cottage in which the Thanksgiving spirit had reigned as it did not in many a pretentious mansion.

Nannie was on her way back to boarding school. Terry was joyous in the prospect of a position as clerk, promised by his employer, while Jack was about to make his home with Burge, or, to call him by his right name, Arthur Ormiston, and his mother.

Here we must leave them, at least for the present, although our hero is just beginning the work that he laid out for himself for the future.

Do you think he will be successful?

Any boy, who is honest and manly and painstaking, is bound to succeed.

Jack Tenfield had all these qualities, and one other I have tried to show in my story, that is, good Yankee pluck.

THE END



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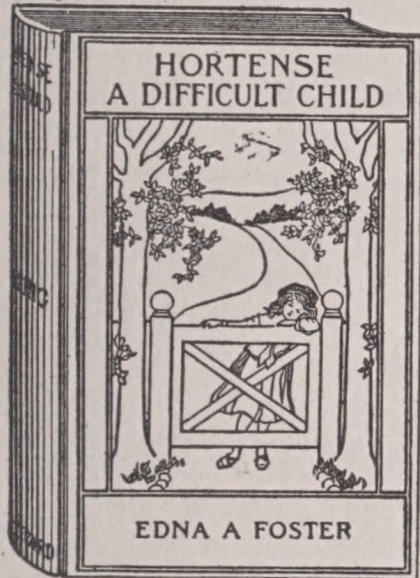
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"Hello! what are you reading?" was the exclamatory question.

"'My Friend Jim,'" was the brief reply.

"Is it good?"

"Well, I guess; it's a dandy!" and with an impatient gesture that indicated that he did not want to be further interrupted, he turned his back toward his questioner and buried his face in his book.

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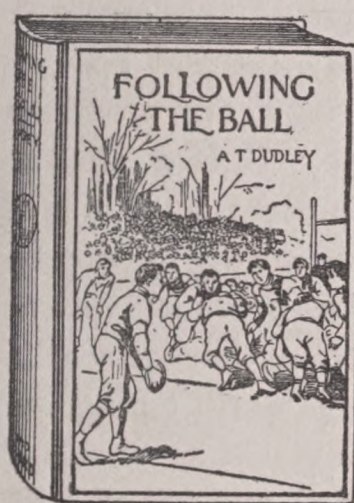


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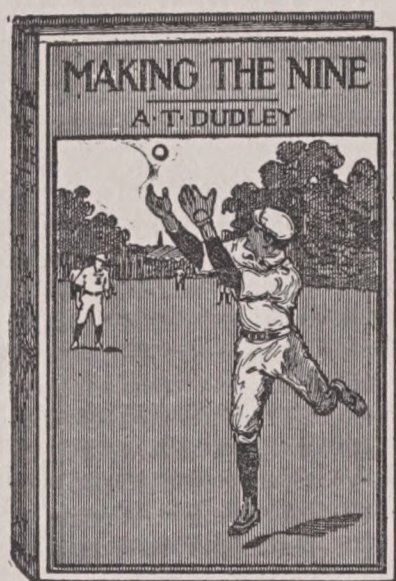
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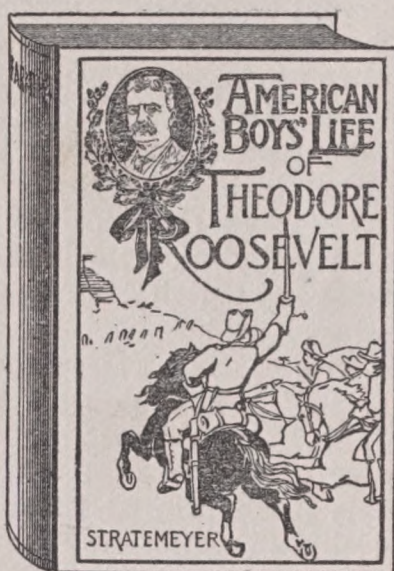
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